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LIFE IN SPAIN.

BY

WALTER THORNBURY.

VOL. II.

LONDON,
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LIFE IN SPAIN:

PAST AND PRESENT.

BY WALTER THORNBURY,

AUTHOR OF

"EVERY MAN HIS OWN TRUMPETER," "ART AND NATURE,"
"SONGS OF THE CAVALIERS AND ROUNDHEADS," ETC.

When you have said "Spain," you have said "everything."
Spanish Proverb.

"A boat, a boat to cross the ferry,
For we'll go over and be merry,
And laugh, and quaff, and drink good sherry."
Old English Glee.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

WITH EIGHT TINTED ILLUSTRATIONS.

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LIFE IN SPAIN.

CHAPTER I.

A BULL-FIGHT AT MALAGA.

"BORN under Taurus," said I, "born under Taurus," as I elbowed, jostled, pushed, and twined through the black, fluent crowd that poured in a dark tide, heads all one way, one burning afternoon in August down the street of the Holy Body in the upper part of the flourishing, raisinous city of Malaga. "Born under Taurus and littered under Mercury," said a Shakspearean echo somewhere inside me; but I did not quite agree with the voice, for the people seemed too intent on the one topic of bulls to care even for thieving. Irishmen make bulls, Spaniards kill them, and English eat them, I thought.

"A Moorish custom," says a learned friend, a reading man, who is with us, eyeing everything through student-spectacles, using the world to under-

stand books by, not using books as a comment on the world; let us call him the Reverend Walter Monoculus, travelling tutor; "a custom peculiar to the Moors of Spain—mark that!—much resembling the bloody struggles of the Colosseum prize-ring, and enabling *a reading man*" (what quiet pride he throws in those simple words) "to realize those death grapples, where blue-daubed Britons fought with black Nubians shining with palm oil, fur-clad Tartars with sinewy Gauls, et cætera."

I know he aims at the manner of Gibbon, does Monoculus; but, not answering, I push on, careless of corns and elbows, through the noisy, well-dressed crowd.

More narrow streets; more balconies purple with small oleander thickets; more pyramids of green and golden melons at shop-doors, and we at last reach the boarded gate of the Plaza de Toros (bull-ring). I show my dark-brown talisman slip of a ticket, marked Secunda Funcion (second exhibition), and pass the quick-eyed Spaniard who takes the money.

So far so good. The inside crowd is wider and more fluent, more scattered, and conflicting; no longer a black moving column of sight-seers, but a broad dark fan as of sharp-shooters spreading out to begin an engagement. The men—but let us get to our seats—us, that is Monoculus, who is fretful and discomposed by the jostle and tidal war, I (*ego*), and

two young officers hot from Gibraltar—let me introduce them. Ensign Spanker, of the Four hundred and fourteenth Light Infantry, and Lieutenant Driver, of the Ninety-second Bombardiers; lion-hearted fellows, thoughtless as Mercutios, audaciously English, and travelling, as far as I find, with the especial scientific purpose of ascertaining the effect of climate on bitter beer. I had seen them all the morning from my hotel balcony (they lodge opposite), draining Bass's yellow nectar from silver tankards, which they carry with them in their portmanteaus for that special scientific purpose. We had made friends, and had taken a box together. This was their tenth bull-fight, and they were great upon the subject of correct blows, chulos' dresses, half-moons, and such tauro-machian trifles.

Our ticket was, of course, a Boletin de Sombra (a shade-ticket), for Sol (sunshine), as the living fire called sunlight is denominated in Spain, is only to be borne by muleteers, grooms, and the poorer amateurs in general. We were under shadow, but we stop first at the door before an immense basket of cheap red and yellow fans—farthing a piece, higgle at the price—buy one each, which is, as Spanker observes in a serious voice, "the right thing to do," pass the outer wall of the arena, to which a row of raw-boned, shaky cab-horses are tied up ready for consumption, and mount a wooden staircase to the row of upper boxes in which our three-dollar seat is. There are

mechanical-looking sentinels in brown great-coats with capes and red epaulettes, who recognise us by a garlicky smile as foreigners (Spanker swears they are "duffers") as we take our front seats, close to the central governor's box, next to which sit some Spanish ladies—a greasy mother, and a graceful daughter who plies her fan with languid perseverance.

Below our ring of upper boxes, running in a crescent of shade along the one side of the Plaza, are sloping rows of seats for small tradesmen and the lower middle-class. On the opposite side, sweating full in the eye of Phœbus, who is specially aggravated just now by the dunning visit of the comet, are the *plebs*—noisy, turbulent, blasting at conch-shells, and working their red and yellow fans like tulip-beds in a state of insurrection at some mal-administration of Queen Rose. Their peeled sticks—the true Andalucian buck never moves without his stick—are rapping in a perturbed way, because the fat, phlegmatic-looking governor has just arrived, and is bowing to the boxes.

The pit below us is shouting for the music, howling pass-words and street cries, and waving flags. Amongst them rears up a mountain fan big enough for the wife of Og King of Bashan, four feet high at least; it is bright yellow, and hung with bells which jingle acclamation. Now, all at once, as the band begins to launch into strange seas of exciting sound, the fans work in a paroxysm of delight. The

noise is as of windmill-arms, of orange groves in a storm, of the wind in a fleet's sails. They pulse all together like the valves of a great foolish monster's heart. Some man, smoking a white cigarette, and in his shirt-sleeves, is the Palinurus who raises or quells these acclamations.

Bang! goes the drum—bang! bang!—more like a cannon than a drum; in and out go the trombone slides, drawing out yards of sound; clash! go the Moorish cymbals; and, over all, the clarionet screams like a mad wild goose.

"This is something like music," says Driver, lighting a cheroot.

"I believe you," says Spanker, taking off his hat and looking inside it.

The band dies away in an apologetic squeak and bray as the fat governor with the red cross at his button-hole pulls a sort of bellrope tied to the arm of a one-eyed deaf trumpeter in scarlet, in the box below him, who, raising his shining horn three times to his lips, gives the signal for the doors to be flung open.

The procession enters.

"Observe their dresses," says Spanker, putting his chin between his two hands, "they shine like blazes, and cost two hundred pounds each, so Solomon" (a Jew attendant) "told me."

"Don't you swallow it, old fellow?" says Spanker, biting a red hole in a pomegranate.

First come four picadors, or lancers, two and two, mounted on Rosinantes. They wear broad-brimmed mouse-coloured hats, bobbed and tasselled with silver lace; their jackets are pink and silver, frosted thick with a glittering spider-work of embroidery, which laps them like a coat of mail; they have red sashes round their waist, and their legs are swollen and cumbrous with buff-breeches, plated with iron; they have heavy, high, peaked war-saddles, such as the Cid may have used, and their stirrups are huge green boxes, intended to guard the foot from heat as well as from the bull's horns. They look calmly brave and ready for any sort of death.

Next come the chulos, or footmen, who are to draw the bull from the overthrown or hard-pushed picador by the lure of those red and blue cloaks that trail from their left shoulders. They are agile as leopards, and when they run seem to fly. They wear short Figaro breeches and stockings, and their shining black hair is fastened up in the old silk nets of the Iberians. They are six in number, and wear liveries of green, red, yellow, purple, brown, and blue. They walk with the strut of kings, and keep time like brave gladiators to the music that is again uneasy by fits.

After the chulos, with their bare heads, come the two matadores, caps in hands. The first one is the great El Tato, the rival of Salamanchino and Domingez, who was once a rich solicitor; but he is not

unfit to compare with the immortal Montes, the slayer of hecatombs of bulls. He doffs his round black montero cap to the governor, and straightway at the sight of their favourite the fans break out into coloured turbulent breakers of applause. "Bravo, El Tato! Bravo!" shout two or three thousand voices, as as many cigars, for a moment, leave as many mouths. El Tato is all in torquoise blue velvet, and has a blue and silver cloak, the colour of the August sky above us; it hangs regally from his left shoulder. The deadly Toledo is not visible, no more are the paper-lace hoops of the tormenting fire-work spears. "Time enough for them," says Driver. The muleta, or little red flag, which is to rouse the bull to fury, and the dagger of mercy, are also unseen.

Last of all comes El tiro, the tinkling mule-team, intended to drag away the dead victims, horse or bull. The four mules are trapped in vermilion housings, wear tufted head-stalls, and bound and kick in one agreement to the click of the runners with whips who go by their sides.

A deep hush like the hush of twilight, as with a clash and crack the procession retires through the open doors—all but the two picadors, who rein up their horses—put their strong lances in firm rest, and back to the furthest arena wall, waiting for their brute enemy. The other two are ready, out of sight, to fill up fallen men's vacancies, when another for Hector

is required. Again the trumpet sounds just as it did in the Colosseum fights, and trotting through the open folding doors comes the manager on horseback, looking rather clumsy and foolish. It used to be the alguacil or constable. Then the fun was to let out the bull and laugh at alguacil's dismay for fear he should be too late in retreat, and get gored. This amiable joke is no longer indulged in.

"That old bloke," says Spanker, "makes two thousand pounds a-year by his troop, so Solomon says."

"Hang Solomon," says Driver.

"I did not know," says Monoculus, waking up from dreams of Strabo, "that there was any allusion to bull-fighting in the Proverbs."

The manager reins up his horse under the governor's box. He is to have a reward if he catch in his hat the key of the toril, or bull-cell, that the governor throws him. The key with the crimson bow passes in a fiery arc from the box into the arena. The manager makes a clumsy stoop at it with his hat, of course misses it, turns red, and is hooted like a butter-fingered boy who has missed an important catch at cricket. So, having first turned red, he next turns his horse's head, and then turns his tail. His exit is followed by another terrible burst. Another trumpet, the Government trumpeter is of course incompetent, and being weak in the lungs blows a wailing melancholy inconsequential toot.

Hurrah! Bravo toro! fans work like machinery. Eyes turn to one spot, as if they were so many dolls' eyes worked with a single string. Look out! the devil is broke loose—here is the bull. Not a real Utera bull, not a Jarama bull, but still a lean, dun, sharp-horned, ugly customer. Seco (dry), carnudo (lean), pegajoso (vicious), duro (tough), chocado (a charger), &c., a butchering, tough, hardy, fleet beast that will not flinch. As he rushes out from his den beneath us with smoking breath and low carnivorous roar, we see a thread of blood running down his left shoulder from a red and blue cockade fastened to a spike, which has been pinned into him as he charges out of his pen. This is the devisa which the matador will wear to-night as a trophy, and give with garlicky kisses to his querida, or darling, who now in white mantilla and with red pinks in her black hair is probably looking on from some snug part of the sombra, which is now dividing the Plaza into two segments of gold sunshine and dark shade.

"Brave son of Guzman, chosen of ten thousand"—cries Monoculus to the picador.

"Take care of your eye," adds Spanker, completing the sentence.

"Shut up, shut up, Spanker!" says Driver, straining his eyes forward.

The picador waits to receive Taurus in the middle of the ring—this is the most dangerous place. The bull with one angry look right and left, and one paw

at the ground, charges round the ring, but at no one in particular. The chulos stand in a waiting band or leap up on the stone rim of the fence that rings round the arena. Now he sees a victim: head down, eyes shut, he drives full butt at the first picador's horse, the spear slips from Taurus's broad sinewy neck, his great crescent horn tears sideways into the white horse's belly.

Wounded?—yes—no!

"Wounded!" says Spanker, with intense scorn. "Dead, by Jove."

Dead, indeed, it was, as if you had struck a wine-cask with the blacksmith's heaviest hammer. One stroke, the blood flooded out, the life passed in one broad crimson gush. The white horse reels, staggers, topples, falls; a sob, a heave, he is dead; in five minutes he will be a mere stiff carrion carcass, ugly and loathsome.

"Bravo, toro!" burst out in a rebellion of sound. The ladies smile and put their heads together, as if they were taking wine with each other. The great fan works like an institution, the conch-shells bray out as the bull, like a greeted champion, charges round triumphantly, shaking his neck, because the cockade stings him; his small, malicious eyes get redder, he must have more blood.

"He'll do," says Spanker confidently to Monoculus, who had turned rather pale when the horse's blood gushed out. We looked down on the dead

creature, and thought over this new reading of the old mystery. Death is terrible; even to think of when it is but a window fly we crush.

"That's too bad," said Solomon, who sat behind us.

"Take care what you're after," said Driver, admonishing him without turning his head.

But what of the fallen picador? He, heavy, lumbering, and helpless as a hog in armour—unwieldy, in fact, as a mediæval knight—has been drawn from under the dead horse, no longer white, but shining crimson with wet blood; picador's leg has been relieved of the horse's weight, and his spear restored to him, but he is bruised and shaken, and between two chulos limps at a funeral pace from the field.

"There's one fellow got his gruel," said Spanker, twiddling his watch chain pleasantly.

Number two picador advances, lance in rest: he does not rush at the bull, because the law of the game is to wait for him; but he puts his lance in rest under his arm, and reining his frightened horse, pushes onward. Taurus needs no excitement; he comes with the impetus of an avalanche: but the lance the full inch deep, or it may be now totally unsheathed, grinds in his neck, and turns him.

"Beautifully turned, by Jove!" cry Driver and Spanker together.

The question is, was Taurus a little calf, to be discouraged by one dig of the garrocha, or will it

only be as fresh fire and powder to his devil-blood, already hot for man-slaughter? Now the chulos skim round him in a kaleidoscope intersection of colours, trailing their cloaks, and drawing him off, to give picador time. Taurus plunges this way and then that, first at blue cloak, then at yellow; his fury is brutal and blind as that of the one-eyed Polyphemus when searching the ground for rolling rocks for the wily Ulysses. But I, remembering some buccaneer reading, comfort myself with the old saying that an enraged cow is more dangerous than a bull, because the female charges with her eyes open, the male with eyes shut. Woe to the men, but for this mad blindness! But for this, such a bull as our friend would charge through an army, or clear a city of armed horsemen.

Again Taurus thunders on picador number two, who is ready and quiet. No, not thunders: stops suddenly; stares fiercely round and then forward; puts down its head; waits to get impetus, and then, like a landslip, bears down heavily on the foe. He braves the lance three times; he grapples with the horse, and ploughs him in the chest with his horn, that comes out of the wound each time red and shining as an autumn moon. There is a rush, a scuffle, and they separate. The chulos draw Taurus off, to fire him into a series of mad, fruitless rushes at waving and trailing cloaks. Again a whirl and race of black and orange, green and gold, blue and

silver, red and green. His dun hide smokes. Every now and then he lets drive at a chulos, chases him up to the outer fence; and, just as a neat shoe and plump silk stocking are clearing the paling, pierces the heavy fence with his angry horn. You hear the sharp prick and shake of the blow; but the chulo is over in a moment, with the vault of a harlequin.

"Why, what is the matter with that picador's horse? and what is that red lump swaying to and fro on his chest?"

"Cruel wretches! I shall go back to the hotel," says Monoculus, gaspingly. "Why, don't you see? It is a great lobing of its lungs, come through where the poor beast was gored."

I shuddered; but the fever as of the chace was on me. I cared, for the moment, only for the next blow—the next charge—the next death.

As the wounded horse limps painfully and bravely round the circus, picador number three rides up and confronts the butchering bull, who, stolidly cruel and easy to be outwitted as the giant in fairy-books, does not yet shrink from punishment. He believes in his strength, and remembers his victory. The picador, holding his heavy lance griped under his right arm, pushes on to the right and turns his horse; when the bull is rebutted to the left, Taurus receives the point. I see it grind round in the wound, and see his neck shake in fierce, impatient agony. He drives

on the wounded horse, rips him—once, twice; he lifts him in the air fierce as a mad rhinoceros, and stabs with his insatiable horn at the fallen, tumbled man, who hides his face with his arms.

"Go it, go it!" cries Spanker, as the chulos, headed by El Tato, lure the bull off, and perform daring feats of contemptuous defiance, such as sitting down on the ground, and waiting till his "spears," as the horns are called, all but touch them.

"Sometimes the bulls will not fight," says Monoculus, who is up in Gomes, and Montez, and Pepillo, and all the tauromachian books; "then they ham-string them with the Iberian half-moon, or the butcher stabs them with the puntilla, but they generally before this try and rouse them with dogs and fireworks. These chulos are nothing. Montez used to sit for a second between the bull's very horns, or leap over his back with a hunting pole."

"Oh, that's raythor too much," said Spanker, "don't lay it on quite so thick. See how those fellows there, with the rakes, who have been scooping up the sand over that pool of horse's blood to prevent the other Rosinantes losing courage, are plugging that great gaping wound in the third horse's chest with tow—they have not time just now to sew it up . . . . it won't do, See how he stumbles—staggers—reels; now they bandage the eyes of the other horse, who funks it."

"Dead, by Jove!" said Driver. "Why, how many

horses does that make. I never knew a bull kill more than a dozen."

I turned away my head for a moment to get rest and freshness for the sight. I looked, and saw a fourth horse overthrown, and gasping on the sand. The bull's neck was red, as if it had been painted with thick vermilion that was still wet. Another dash or two and its rushes grew weaker. The brute began to paw the sand and trot in an unmeaning way, chasing the chulos round the arena. The picadors cantered round, or stood lance in rest. Taurus was cowed; had no more quick, angry one-two stabs; was done for.

There is a great, angry cry of "Banderillas, banderillas!"

"They want the fireworks," says Spanker; and as all the pit rise and turn their faces to the phlegmatic governor with shells blowing and fans working, he gives a quiet signal, and the picadors trot discontentedly out. The first act of the tragedy, as Ford calls it, is over.

The bull wants stimulants—tonics—and here they are. There is a bustle at the barriers, as two chulos, the green and red—leap over with the firework darts, all ready lit. The darts look, from our distance, mere chimney-piece ornaments, but are literally spears about three feet long, and strong enough to kill a shark, with barbs of about an inch. The ash sticks of these instruments of torture are ornamented

with hoops of red and blue cut paper, containing squib and cracker mixture. Sometimes, as in this case, they are without fireworks.

The chulos, each holding one of these, in either hand, far above their heads, so that they look like large butterflies, and increasing the resemblance by fluttering them, to give them an impetus, run nimbly towards the bull; the other chulos, rolling up their dusty and torn cloaks round their arms, await the interlude with cruel, thoughtless gusto. Number one runs forward, and meeting the bull, with quick eye and winged foot, just as his red horns go down to toss his harlequin enemy, lodges the two darts with light, strong thrust into the neck, so as to exactly match.

"Buenos pares!" a pretty pair, shout the populace, who think this quite a piece of epigrammatic humour. Blue follows suit, and lodges his pair; orange runs up and stabs in a third pair, and away goes the outwitted monster, shaking the darts that toss and rattle together like loose Indian arrows in a hunted lion's side.

"You should smell the burnt hair when they use the fireworks," says Spanker, who does not want me to think that I am seeing the real thing.

"Don't pitch it in too strong, Spanker," says Driver, who prides himself on his power in that rude sort of repartee, called in mess-rooms, chaffing. The subs certainly were fond of slang.

Third trumpet—now for it. The chulos depart, as the great El Tato, throwing by his cloak, comes forward with bare, shining Toledo-rapier, in his strong hand, and in his left the red muleta flag, which is to irritate the bull, and assist his stroke. He struts up to the governor's box, and there is an awful silence that makes even the bull, who is clashing the banderillas together, and trying to shake them out, at the further end of the arena, look for a moment stupidly round. El Tato raises the sword, that shines like a sunbeam, high and threateningly in his right hand; kisses it; repeats in a loud, clear voice, an oath, in the name of all the saints, that either he or the bull shall die; and so saying, with proud look and flashing eye, flings back the hand which has been resting on his heart, tosses off his cap, and turns fiercely to achieve the deed of "derring do" amid a murmur of applause that passes round like a shudder, —so deep, so earnest is it. (Are there no such men to stride forth and battle with the vices of Spain, —the bigotry, lust, cowardice, and pride? Have the real paladins now no work but to fox-hunt in England and kill bulls in Spain?)

El Tato wraps his left arm in his red flag, and tosses it at the bull's horns, leaping aside as it charges, and tiring it with wheels and vaultings. Suddenly the head of Taurus turns towards him favourably; he has already studied the bull,—learned if it is cunning or sullen—hot or shy; he has drawn with

his flag all the banderillas to one side; they are no longer lying in the way—no longer dishevelled about the creature's neck. Suddenly El Tato presents the bright sword that he has kept behind his back. One steady, strong, deep thrust between the shoulders ——the bull falls—is dead.

Good heavens! what cheers, like thunder! What brown showers of votive cigars and black caps, as El Tato, drawing out the red steel, wipes it on the red flag, and bows to the governor, lowering the point.

"Give him the bull," roar the two thousand, and so say the fans, and shells. All eyes turn with a black twinkle to the governor. He waves his hand. The bull is El Tato's; he must cut off the right ear that he may know it among the other dead eight he and his assistants are yet to slay.

"What barbarians we must be," says Spanker, "not to get fun like this out of our beef-killing. I'd like to put down Newgate Market, and turn Smithfield into a bull-ring."

"The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel," says Monoculus.

"Who do you call wicked?" cry Spanker and Driver both in a breath, snapping round sharply on Monoculus.

"I was only quoting Scripture," said Monoculus, putting his thin ascetic hands together, and innocently looking down to see if they exactly matched.

"Then, just be kind enough not to do it again. Officers and gentlemen don't like those sort of observations."

Monoculus apologised. I smiled.

"Alas!" sighed Monoculus, "this chivalrous but cruel amusement is sadly fallen off and degenerated since the days of the Abencerrages. The picadors then were gentlemen, who displayed their courage and dexterous riding, not for hire, but to win smiles from their ladies, who sat looking on. The mere death-thrust was then a secondary thing; and instead of those carrion knackers' horses, they wheeled and circled on fiery Arabs, each worth a kingdom, and at whose death queens might have wept. Those turbaned men fought with simple javelins four feet long, and slew the bull unaided, and with their own hands. The bulls of Geryon, that Hercules stole, are still certainly strong and fierce; but they are, after all, lean and small, and not to be compared to the bulls of England for power or muscle."

"I believe you," says Spanker, brushing his moustachio, to gracefully conceal a yawn. "There was an English bull this year at Seville that bore down picadors, chulos, espadas, and all, cleared the ring; and was eventually (after leaping into the crowd) shot down by a file of frightened soldiers,—the whole garrison, that's all."

"But though no longer the amusement of high-born men," continues Monoculus, determined not to

spare us, "the bull-fight is more popular than ever in Spain. Philip the Fifth, and French tastes, may have weaned the higher classes from actually dipping their own hands in bull's blood; but men who know the country well, assure me the taste for bull-fighting increases. Look at those ladies next us, in their black mantillas, calm and pleased as spectators of an opera; and look there below, past the soldiers, walks a respectable fat tradesman, holding the hand of his delighted child. See how the people in the stiff round black caps buzz and gossip between the acts, discussing the character of the last bull, whether he was 'a goat' or 'a butcher.'"

Another bull,—this is a coward. He paws the sand as if he were trying to dig his own grave. He sniffs about, and does nothing; he makes rapid purposeless bolts at the tormenting chulos, but does not follow them to the fence, through whose slits they slip, or over which they vault. He will not face the stooping picador, who, staunch and eager, waits for him with protruded lance. He is a craven, spite of his black chesnut hide and the first fierce amble which raised public expectations as he burst from the toril. The people hiss, and express noisy dissatisfaction with their fans in a ribald and tumultuous way that would hurt any respectable, high-spirited bull's feelings. Taurus looks round with a stupid air of inquiry at their hard, insulting faces, and the open, whooping mouths, but sees no pity. He is as a gla-

diator when the fatal thumbs were turned down. He has but one object, we see,—to get out of it. He dashes impotently at a runaway chulo, and springs at the palings; his forelegs are over, but he tumbles back helplessly, bruised and jolted, much to the delight of the water-sellers and the soldiers who stand in the passage that runs outside the ring fence. "Cobardo, cobardo!" cry the despisers of Martin's act; and instantly, as if flapped out and extinguished by the elementary agitation of the coloured fans, the two picadors trot out like Castor and Pollux, side by side, and the chulos with the fireworks appear. The people stop for a moment raising those thin blue whiffs of cigar-smoke, that have hitherto given the circus the air of a large kitchen. The darts are planted in winged pairs. The craven bull trots off with them, rather inclined to be proud of his new distinctions. He takes them, on the whole, as strongly expressed, but still pointed compliments. A smoke, a flash, a low flare, and with a blue dazzle and smoulder, the hoops go off like a discharge of musketry. They fizz, and bang, and scorch, and scare, but nothing rouses his lily liver. There is something stubbornly grand in his objection to the use of arms. He is a Cobden bull; he is of the race of Bright. He objects to fight on principle. He even stoops and smells at a burning firework-hoop that has fallen under his nose. He is a bull of an inquiring, meditative, philosophic turn, and must have been the

actual hero of some of Æsop's fables. His doom is come; he is now in the prime of life and health, clear of eye, and sound of skin, save where a red rope of blood twines down his shoulders from the banderilla wounds, yet he has but just three minutes to live. El Tato repeats his oath hastily and carelessly, and advances with sword and red flag. A bull, untired and unhurt, is generally difficult to strike, because, unless the head is down for the charge, exposing the spine and shoulders, the blow cannot be given. Shall he kill him by advancing or retreating. The thrust is a moment to sooon. The bull runs off with the sword buried between his shoulders. He is sorely hurt, but may still live long. There is a disappointed and vexed stir of the fans as El Tato runs after Taurus with his flag, to try and drag out the weapon; but, before he can do it, as the bull passes under the pit, a soldier's strong hand drives the weapon down into the heart. Taurus stands quite still, the blood snorting out from his lips and nostrils; then, gathering himself together like a dying Cæsar, falls gently on his knees, and sinks to the ground. The fans are at it again, as the head butcher of the town, a strong, stout man in black, leaps down, and, with a dagger, divides the spinal marrow. The blow sounds as when you chop a pumpkin in two. As by enchantment, or as if risen from the ground, the gay mule team appears, the dead bull is tied to the yoke, and swept out in a swift dusty whirl, the other team dragging

out also a picador's wounded horse that is just dead—racing for priority, and tearing out together with a clash of bells and a rifle-cracking of long whips; a whiff of smoke and a gunpowder smell are all that remain to remind us of the scene.

No shower of cigars or black turban hats this time. El Tato looks vexed, and thirsts for more bulls. This astonishes Driver, who has got some legendary impressions of insurrections that have taken place at Malaga bull-fights; the fishermen and *employés* of that town being proverbially restless and turbulent. I think he half expects El Tato and the manager to be thrown to the bulls, if another blunder happens.

A bellow out of sight, and at the trumpet call, like a new monster in an Ezekiel vision, now leaps forth a cream-coloured bull, with brindled, thick, ropy neck, red eyes, and terrific crescent horns.

"Scissors!" exclaims Spanker, under breath, letting drop a musk grape he was just cartridging into his mouth.

If by this singular exclamation Spanker meant to express apprehension and foreboding, he was right. Taurus gored and floored everything, drove one picador in a bruised ruin, with a smashing thump, against the barrier, to which he clung; ripped up a ghastly one-eyed brown horse, whose sight had been bandaged to prevent its shunning the charge; all but pinned a chulo; broke down in a stubborn squelter-

ing leap the top plank of the barrier; and, finally, to crown all his honours, tossed a picador, and, after many strokes of his horns, which clicked against his iron-guarded leg, ended by simply tearing his costly jacket in the left shoulder. As for the horse, I dared not look at it; but I saw something on the sand that looked like trays of butchers' meat that had been upset. There was a jet of blood, a gush, a flooding, —so died three horses, with a drunken, blind stagger, a flicker, a kick, and then death. Three times the thundering ferocious giant leaped on the barriers with unreasoning strength. It gores another horse under the left leg; it tears about purposeless, helmless, in short spurts of mad, firework rage—a grand type of blind passion, fiery life, and brute power, it pounds along, a chulo's red cloak trailing from his horn. There are great raw spots of gore on him, and one of his horns is broken by striking at one of the stone supports of the barriers. A fat tradesman next us, with four feet of red scarf round his bowels, gets very hot, crying "Bravo, Toro!" This bull is decidedly a game bull, a sort of hero, who will die surrounded by his dead enemies, which to the bovine and even to the rough human mind has before this been a satisfaction. The cigars are working in short excited puffs, with much blue sacrificial incense-smoke; and the barefooted attendants are busy stuffing tow, trying to plug a horse's chest, like ship-carpenters intent on stopping a shot-hole.

Now the picador who has been unhorsed, and has his rich jacket torn, amuses everybody, and sets the fans to work, by suddenly rushing at a mounted friend, and trying to pull him off by tugging at his leg.

"There's going to be a shindy," says Spanker, doubling his fist.

"I really am afraid the men are coming to blows," says Monoculus.

A man in a white jacket near us relieves our mind, by taking his cigar out of his mouth, and telling us that it is only the picador wanting to be revenged on the bull that's torn his jacket. He swears to do or die, all alone in the middle of the arena, where there is no retreat. The chulos, one leg over the barrier, furling up their cloaks, laugh as picador pushes off his friend, leaps up in his saddle, seizes a heavy curved lance and dashes off to face the bull,—first making the oath, and dashing away his hat to show that he is deeply in earnest. The way he spurned the air and tossed up his lance had a chivalric defiance about it. The bull drove at him with a sullen, blind, abstract stare. He turned the minotaur with his lance, twice, three times, till the animal's courage and life began to drain away. In vain groves of sticks descended in blows on the bull as it passed the arena-wall: it was of no use, it was spent and cowed. The banderillas were thrown, and, lastly, not El Tato, but his assistant, came forward

with the death-sword in his hand, in strut magnificent—in style not to be sneezed at. He is the pet of the Calle di Mari-blanca: he is a promising bull-slayer, but still not a prima espada—a premier; indeed, only the sobrisaliente (assistant). If a bull is slow and shy, heavy and cunning, it is difficult game; but a bold bull, that goes straight at the horse, always forgetting the man, is easy to slay. This is a bold bull. To be long killing a bull, is always to be insulted by the people. He is a beginner; El Tato looks on: the governor is there, and half Malaga. He has his laurels to win. Last Sunday's fight was a bad one; the season is late, it is too hot, and the bulls are getting tamer. For all these reasons, he must give a buen estoque—a sure thrust: his suerte, or plan of killing, must be good: he must put the keen, strong blade sure in between the left shoulder and the left shoulder-blade. Now he drives it in up to the hilt, but the bull staggers on to the barriers.

"A mull, by Jupiter!" cries Spanker, so loud that the governor looks round, and says something snubbing to the trumpeter.

"The young man wants reading and experience," said Monoculus.

Alas! for the fallibility of reading, and even of military men—the deed is done. The media espada, agile and lithe, with his netted hair and long pig-tail, coolly draws out the sword, wipes it, and

returns it over the barrier. Fans may break out in petulant foolishness, but media espada of El Tato's troop flatters himself rather that he has not lived thirty years for nothing, and at least knows how to kill a bull. He strides off like a king, and waits while the butcher, quietly driving the sword home, gives the coup de grace—quick, sure, careless, and indifferent to applause. If he had missed, there would have been a rain of mere burnt cigar-stumps, and broken fan-sticks; now the cigarettes make the air white as snow-time, and the round black caps heap up at his feet. The caps he flung back with bows, the cigars are collected for him. The dead bull is drawn out in a dusty circle, his legs stiff and still threatening; and now, high over all the rustle and flap of fans comes the shrill, melancholy cry of the bare-legged water-seller—A-gua! A-gua! like the wail of some sufferer in purgatory. Our tired eyes, now wearied of blood, look up to the sky above us, where some doves are circling like wondering angels, or beyond, to the broad undulating horizon skirted by mountains, brown and purple, that are strewn with white houses, like giant's treasures laid out to sun.

Here was unheavenly work doing within sight of paradise.

"Is it not horrible," says Monoculus, "to hear Christian men, seated by women and children they love, tell you, when you pity a dying horse, it is

worth nothing; or when you shudder at the bull growing red, calling out that he has a 'buen cuerpo de sangre?'"

"It is exciting," I said, "but so is drinking; it makes the sight of bloodshed habitual; it hardens the moral sense; it debases, at least, women and children. No English lady could stop out a single course. Ford says, they are always frightened, disgusted, disappointed."

"Get out!" says Driver. "Why, a Malaga merchant told me that English ladies often get very fond of it, and become great amateurs in all the scientific points of skill; but you must come to our digging after this, liquor up, and discuss the moral question."

"I say, you men," says Spanker, "just look at El Tato."

"All right," says Driver.

We look round, for, jaded with the repetition of mere slaughter, we had turned our backs for a moment to talk. El Tato, gay in his tight-fitting dress of blue velvet, is labouring hard by feats of agile daring to retrieve the character of his troop. A bull-fight costs some three hundred pounds, and is not to be trifled with. How he strikes the ground; how he rages and chafes the bull with that long blue cloak that he holds up like a curtain before his inquiring horns. Now he turns it right—left; he flings it over the creature's head; he puts it on,

and lets it drag before the bull to tempt him. He laughs at him as he pursues his Parthian flight, looking back, first over his right shoulder, then over his left. He sits—actually sits for a moment—before him; then leaps aside as he charges. He flaps him with his cap, he strikes him, kneels before him, and now—crown of all audacity—he positively turns and bobs down upon his head, then runs. No!—Yes!—No!—Yes! The bull has gored him slightly in the right buttock; the blue silk is torn and flaps: you see the red stain under. El Tato limps; he is faint; the laughing of the two thousand dies away into a murmur. No!—no!—he is not hurt much; he smiles and bows to the people; but, still tying round a handkerchief, limps to the barriers.

But why more, when even Spanker droops and yawns, and Driver talks of dinner, and says it gets "slow." One cannot expect El Tato to be gored every five minutes; we cannot expect every bull to sweep off a dozen horses "to his own cheek," as Spanker beautifully puts it. The horrid truth is—but we dare not say so—that we are thirsting for more excitement, more goring of men, a dead picador carried from the list, or a combat of unnatural opponents—say a boa constrictor and a lion, or an elk and a wild boar, something to rouse the jaded sense, and make our tired eyes leap from their sockets. We want, but we dare not say it, human combats, gladiators, slippery with blood and oil, searching

with red swords for each other's lives. Yes, the old Roman taste, the taste of the grand classical bad age is on us.

Before the sport, now so wearisome, is over, before the populace break loose like a sea and flood the arena, we hurry out like Lot from Sodom. We meet in the street the priests carrying back the host, which is always brought to the bull-ring for fear a matador might be wounded to the death.

"What about that beer?" says Spanker, inquiringly, as we three take our seats in the Hotel divan, and discuss the moral bearing and effect of the scene we have witnessed. Spanker and Driver view it as jolly fun, and like the risky riding. Monoculus is lost in admiration of its antiquity. I rise, and pronounce the verdict.

"Gentlemen," I said, tapping my broken fan authoritatively on the table, "the thing is a bad, cruel thing; it inures the mind to the sight of blood, and hardens the heart. No wonder the Spaniard is too fond of using his knife; no wonder he thinks not more of taking life, when he can do it safely, than I do of snapping this fan I hold in my hand. It must brush the bloom from the youth, modesty from the maiden. All we can say for it is, that it may be tolerated in a nation who, neither sensitive nor thoughtful, are at least two centuries behind ourselves. We once had our bull-baitings; we once used the knife as freely as the Spaniard. The

coarser-nerved Spaniard, in seeing the bull-fight, sees a habitual thing, and has not the sense of sharing in a crime that we have."

"What do you say to more beer, old fellow? You must be dry after that," says Spanker, looking intently into his silver tankard.

CHAPTER II.

OUT OF DOORS IN MALAGA.

He was so dirty, that even the *whites* of his eyes were brown—Is this a bull?

Who is *he?* *He!* why the street beggar who pointed me out the little trim lawyer, Salamanchino, who had turned bull-fighter, and whom I saw reading the great rose-coloured posting-bill stuck up just outside the cathedral at Malaga. The beggar pointed him out to me, in return for a cuatro, a mere dump, as a great public character; and softly and quietly, as a velvet-footed French spy, I followed the prima espada (first sword), taking care to walk the opposite side of the street, and stop only when he stopped. I was watching Salamanchino cheapen a green melon (price twopence), netted with a tangle that looked like white thread, and specially rejoicing in the cupfull of golden syrup water-honey wine of Paradise that lay in a pool at the sliced out-core, when I suddenly remembered that in this curious country it is not unusual to find your handful of copper change to consist of coins of the Roman Hadrian,

and Flemish Charles the Fifth, mixed up with sprinkles of the Bourbon kings, and a few make-weight Philip the Seconds. Half of them are generally mere shapeless lumps of copper, brown and shiny, looking much as if just dug from the mine and encased in their native matrix or mould, not much unlike those massy, strongly stamped coins with Vespasian and his eagle hewn upon them, that you dig up round the grassy-mounded ramparts of the Roman camps in England. The thought struck me that, perhaps, in the natural warmth of my charity (I wish my cigars cost as little as my charity), in the eager zeal of my philanthropy, I had given to the one-eyed beggar with the dirty bandages round his feet an antiquarian treasure. I left Salamanchino going along innocently heedless, and ran back headlong, like a possessed man, to the old man, whom, with a yellow handkerchief strained over his head and tied in a knot behind, I could see, passing the cathedral door, and just entering a brandy-shop. He had gulped down an egg-cup full of brandy and anisette, when I seized him by the arm, and said:—

"My dear friend, give me back those coppers."

To my astonishment, the beggar gave me a frightened stare, cried, "No, no—rather death;" and made a bolt (forgetting to pay for his aniseed) under the flapping brown curtain of the adjacent church, where I did not care to follow him.

I explained the case to the landlord of the brandy-shop, above whose head I read a notice requesting alms "to liberate the souls in purgatory," the souls being represented by little naked men frying in a vermilion and gamboge fire.

"Poor man!" said the landlord, winking at some muleteers, "he thought you were going to strike him. We Malagese do not know the way of you Señores Ingleses: but it is hard that no one pays for my anisette."

I threw down the pence, and, in return, was allowed a free antiquarian rummage of the landlord's till, which was not altogether fruitless.

Then I fell into the position of an exponent of English manners; and, sitting down on a precarious and discontented bench, had to explain to a lively young Spanish artilleryman that Ireland was not a suburb of London, but an adjacent island, prosperous and contented; and that Kent was not a kingdom, but only a province of England. The fame of these disclosures sucked in nearly everybody that passed by the door, including various muleteers in tight chesnut-coloured breeches and silvery buttons, and also a man carrying on his head a pig-skin of wine, which looked like a bolster case, or a little water-bed, the legs tied up to serve as spouts. It even drew in magnetically the escribano, or public letter writer, whom I had often stopped to look at, as in his open doorway at a rickety deal table, garnished

with inkstand, pen, and paper, he sat wrapped in his threadbare blue cloak, waiting for black-haired maidens who, unable to write to absent lovers, feel that sort of dumb longing, that voiceless desire, that the young song-bird feels ere the song comes. For such maidens, and for anxious mothers, sits all day our patient scribe at his desk, eyeing every one who passes, and nibbing his pen, that he may remind them of, or suggest to them, a want. Then a muleteer, with his laced jacket, thrown hussar-fashion over his left shoulder, runs out to bring in the money-changer, who sits on a small stool at the corner of the street before his tray, on which are ten or twelve heaps of copper change. He being rather an oracle, is put forward to pump and pose me: he wants to know—and the brown faces gather closer around me as he speaks—whether the Queen lives at the Tower of London, and if it is true that Prince Alberto put to death Georgio the Third, in order to get the throne? I put him right on these points, and am trying to explain to him the checks and counterchecks of our glorious constitution, that is so totally different in reality from what it is on paper. I should probably have gone pretty well through English history, when I was interrupted by a tremendous kicking and spluttering of hoofs outside in the rough pebbly street.

It was a raisin-boy who, after a savage struggle with his mule, was at this moment flung with a

tremendous bump almost at the threshold. We all ran out. There was the beast, stubborn and stupid as Balaam's ass, standing still with straddling feet, the striped saddle-bags still swagging on its back, with malicious eyes, all white and turned backwards to watch the fallen rider, over whom he now lifted up his discordant voice in a shrill outburst of triumph. The boy, a mass of chesnut-coloured smalls, lay insensible on the stones, with some kind Dolorosa already chafing his temples, and some judicious Sancho putting water to his white lips. An active quarrel was getting up over the body, as over a dead Grecian hero in the Iliad, as to whether it was partly a fit or altogether a fall.

"Bleed him," said a passing barber.

"Extreme unction," said a cassocked priest, on his way to dinner.

"It is nothing," said the boy's master, coming up and shaking the boy roughly by the thin arm.

"Nothing at all," said a waggoner, who could not get his ox-waggon by for the sympathising crowd.

"He is shamming," said a cocked-hat gendarme; "bring the whip."

"Give him some wine," said the landlord, holding out his hand ready to be paid before he did the work of charity.

Suddenly, as in one of the early miracles of the Pagan church, the boy struggled, gathered himself up, stared at his master, half frightened, half depre-

catingly, ran and kicked the mule in the stomach, leaped on his back, made a push at the crowd, and trotted coolly off, as if such ups and downs with Malaga donkey-boys were every-day things.

"The possibility of a hero," said I, lighting my cigar.

"Fruit for the gallows," said the gendarme, calling for a glass of orgeat.

"No doubt a Protestant," said the priest, holding his nose as if he had suddenly set his foot on a dead dog.

"He would have revived sooner with my wine," said the landlord, regretfully.

I had touched my hat to the muleteers who, with immense dagger-knives, were hewing their dinners out of melons large as green kilderkins; I had paid the landlord; I had offered the escribano a cigar, and departed, with the usual pious recommendation to God's blessing, when, on my way to my old friend Jose Blanco's, the tobacconist, in the street of the Seven Sorrows, I was driven into a doorway by the advent of a great caravan, such as Chaucer's pilgrims to Compostella must have seen, and which has never improved or altered one tittle since then. It was the galera bound from Malaga to Granada, about which journey it would take some three days or so.

And here, for highly civilized English readers, impatient because the half-past three express is five minutes too slow, let me stop a moment at the road-

side inn of an episode to briefly describe the various means of transit open to modern travellers in Spain. First, there is the correo, or mail-cart, which carries the conductor, driver, and three or four passengers. The correo travels six miles an hour, stops hardly anywhere for meals—tumbles, jolts, flounders, and wallops on—charging you threepence a mile, and generally compelling you to leave your luggage behind. The correo is always full when you want a place, is punctual to within four hours of the specified time, and is a "dem'd" delightful, fever-breeding, flea-haunted, leg-cramping, bone-breaking conveyance, rather better than an English dung-cart, and about as clean. You never have room for five minutes together to stretch your legs, and, to render ease more impossible, the narrow space under the seats is built up with sacks of chopped straw, mule harness, pack-saddles, and lumbering green-rinded melons. The rain pierces the awning above your head, or the sun cuts through it remorselessly. Through the open door, that admits no air, the dust sifts in as from a restless pepper-castor, and all the light that ought to reach you is blocked out by the two men who sit on the front seat with the driver. As for axles breaking and horses falling, that is nothing, because you can neither read, sleep, sit, nor stand in the accursed purgatory on wheels called in Spanish the correo.

The diligencia is the diligence as it is everywhere

—ponderous, slow, stuffy, and behind time, but tolerably sure and safe. The conductor is a good fellow, and the meals are tolerable. Then, if you are clothed in bank-notes you can ride post with a carrier's guide, or hire a coche de cocleras—a trip to Scarborough, family coach lugged by a drove of mules, who crawl only thirty tedious miles a day. In a city you can get your calesa or your painted showman's tartana sending on your luggage by the strings of carriers mules; but, ten to one, if you go faster in Spain you will fare worse, and have to finally entrust your carcase to what has just driven me into port—the GALERA.

And what is the galera? That ark-like caravan drawn by six pairs of oxen drumbles now passed me with its matted sides and market-cart awning—"melancholy slow,"—laden with its patient, shaken-down peasants, mothers, sucklings, priests, and country "buck," smoking, eating, talking, growing sick, and sleeping.

Now, the galera is all very well, grinding—a tumbling Leviathan like a Noah's ark—along the knobbly streets of Barcelona or Malaga, or even along th eight royal roads of which the ill-used country boasts, which, however, are all full of trap-holes, where springs snap and bones crack; but on the minor road, just passable, imagine it! Much more, then, forbear to think of the bridle-roads and "partridge roads," or the river beds, that in some places, when

not otherwise engaged, serve for the muleteers' passages.

Taking a regretful look of pity and astonishment at this mountain waggon toiling along irresistible and slow as a land ship, and smiling to express what I feel at the stolid and contented lazy faces I meet, I push on to Jose Blanco's, at whose door a gale from Havannah and the Spice Islands greets me—

> Where happy, happy people, on the hills that look afar,
> Lie all day and read the paper, and smoke the mild cigar.

Jose is snuffy and gay behind his counter, walled in with brown tubings of the weed that cheers but does not inebriate; that makes adolescence sick and manhood jolly.

"Hot! Maria purissima!" says he to me; "Jesus! how hot it is!"

"Sin pecado concebida (son of my soul)!" I say, "may your shadow never be less."

What cigars do I want to-day? He touches the brown scented bundles as if he was playing the organ. "We all do fade as doth a leaf." Of all prices—the best never less than threepence each; of all weights—eighty-six, a hundred and fourteen, a hundred and twenty-five, two hundred and twelve even, to the pound. Such names! why, it is like reading over the labels on a seedsman's drawers: Cabanas, Partagas, Intimidades (fearless), Super Omnias, Globos, Xuecas, Martinezes, Triumvirates, Plantas, Nectars,

Blunderbusses, Guaniguanicos, Tarantellas, Cacadores, et cætera, et cætera, forty-six shillings a box, or twenty-six shillings a box; or, if I like a pipe, will I try Gold-leaf, or Honey-dew, or Bird's-eye, or the Sultan's white thread, made of tobacco-flowers. Much pressed, I smoke a Lopez—thick as a flageolet—and finding its ash remain in a white column tipped with crimson, I order a box to my hotel, and wander off to fresh latitudes—flaneur-born that I am.

On my way to the Cathedral, which shuts for siesta just as every other building does in Spain, where even religion has its noon-day nap, I stop and am amused at some smiths at work in an angle of the open street opposite their shops, making an iron bed, filing, hammering, and slowly building up, with wise and thoughtful violence, the quiet sleeping-place of future generations. There are many gossips round them, who wince when the workmen wince, and smile when they smile, applaud a settling and satisfactory blow, and condole at an unsatisfactory one. But what I want is not to look at these hammer-men, but to get some arquebusade for a bruised finger at Monsieur Jozeau's, the civil French chemist's, near the custom-house orange-tubs. Now, Monsieur Jozeau is a good but talkative man, and I dread his recapitulation of all the neat, new novelties just arrived from Paris. I do not want purgative-lemonade, or syrup of flowers, Stramonium cigarettes, worm-seed, cucumber cream, Racahout, or

even the syrup de Framboise, or the Alexandrian Haschisch.

I leave, for the Celestines of Paris, the chloroform capsules for sea-sickness, and the vinegar of the Four Robbers, that curious preservation against the plague, discovered by four corpse robbers in the time of some great French pestilence. Braving, however, all the torments of French garrulity, I stroll in, buy my arquebusade, amuse my picture-making eye with observing the red pool of light that his gay window-bottles cast on the opposite wall of the street, and which I could fancy suddenly striking on the face or hand of some wandering Cain of a murderer, driving him to a passionate confession of his guilt which, of course (so my story would go), a passing gendarme watching at an elbow of the street wall, hears and acts upon.

A visit to the post-office, to read the list of unclaimed letters, every third one being directed to some German Jotz, and the English ones being all re-directed in Spanish to Senor Don, Esq. Spanish officials at hotels, custom-houses, and post-offices always suppose Esq. to be a name; and I hurry off to the Cathedral for fear it should be shut for the siesta, wanting shade and a quiet place where I may settle what I shall have for dinner.

Far at sea, those two Corinthian florid towers look as if they were cut out of Windsor soap, and seem close to the blue wave that scoops the shore: "Begun

in fifteen hundred and thirty-eight; finished in seventeen hundred and nineteen," says the red guide-book. The way of Spain—one tower-capped and domed; the other, unfinished, as a precaution against the evil eye. It is just like the cathedral at Seville. The way of Spain again: red marble pulpit like an egg-cup—very good! fluted Corinthian pillars—good again! altar major—so, so; interior generally not so—but this is a poor opera-house of a church, and tawdry enough after that great cave of a cathedral at Seville, that dark ark with its ninety-three portholes, paned with the eternal flowers of Paradise, and resonant with the songs of passing angels round the dying out Shecinah still clinging round the altars—the central sun altar, and its lesser side-chapel planets. That church, like this, was raised on the site of a Moorish mosque.

Blessing to the wise builder who reared that pile to God, and, unchurchwarden-like, left no record even of his name! How small one seemed—small as a mite inside a Stilton—pacing over that world of stone, with its giant pillars, screened by sculptured marble groves of carved wood-work, its countless images, pictures, and bas-reliefs; its silver shrines and terra-cotta idols! And yet I was surprised and moved more by that curious old Moorish pantheon I stumbled into yesterday, in that little dark street, where piles of charcoal were heaped up at the doors, and the stalls were hung with smoked gilded-looking

fish with their mouths open, as if they had died screaming, or trying perhaps to make a swan ending of it, and depart with music and a song; where vendors sat with arms sullenly crossed, calmly indifferent to purchasers, as an Irish orange-seller at a London fruit-stall, who knits over her greasy book of Catholic prayers.

"Perhaps they are right," I said, "for what is the struggle of life but scrambling up a greasy pole for a leg of mutton and trimmings? Call it a coronet, call it a place, you perhaps never get it—death always pulls you down by the tail, just as you have your greedy hand upon the prize."

It was a circular church, spanned by a low dome, as low as that of the Pantheon, so that its huge metal bowl was palpable to us in all its grandeur and immensity. I came into it suddenly from the little, narrow, knubbly street, where bullocks lounged heavily along; where the herdsmen in sheepskin jackets, the rough wool side out, followed with their lances over their shoulders; and where, in the windows, bloodthirsty dagger-knives, large as sickle blades, were for sale. The sluggish pounding of some tin-kettle of a bell aloft, over the blue porcelain-tiled roof of the dome, drove me in under the dirty green-yellow curtain, rousing in me a sudden sense of religious want, and a pang of that religious instinct that cries for food within our blind hearts, and will not be said nay. I followed in some rough

men who took off their hats gravely as a little beggar-girl, not unmindful of "quarts," lifted up the end of the fringed curtain with all the dexterity of long habit, a small picker up of crumbs in the courts of the house of her God. I, with my mind, was still busy printing off in its inner workshops photographs of the raisin city, that the Moors called "the gate-way of Paradise," and which, indeed, is so thought, with a pardonable sigh—though sighs, except in books, are not common—to many a beautiful English girl, who, driven out by the doctors to die where she will be no disgrace to them, comes here with the death-bloom on her cheek, longing for health, and thinking how lonely the grave must be, for the square black hole is a terrible bedroom for the young to go to sleep in.

I expected Corinthian pillars, row on row; gilt grown into roof flowers; altars stuck with candles, and side chapels gay as a beauty's toilette. I expected the dreadful Churrigueresque, as the Spanish blustering renaissance is called. I found a quiet, solitary church, with a dying pansy purple-fading out about the small upper sun-excluding windows; the last tinges of daylight lingering like yellow leaves blown up against the wall, at the points farthest removed from the three pendant brazen lamps that swung with a visible halo round them. Above the central altar and two side-chapels, the light was not sufficient to pick out and hold up to garish ridicule the

wax feet, chains, and knives, stuck as votive offerings round the shrines, and hid in generous obscurity the painted wooden saints and the little ballet-dancing virgins, all dirty muslin, tinsel crowns, and spangled jewellery, so that the soft yellow lamplight melting into an outer edge of luminous darkness—the darkness not of black marble, but of a midnight sea—wrapped all the myrrh-scented building in an atmosphere of all-pervading beauty, love, and charity. The priests had not yet come, for it wanted ten minutes or so to service; but a white-caped acolyte, young and innocent as one of Murillo's cherubim grown up, was tripping about with a religious fervour almost mirthful and sunshiny, lighting the altar-candles. How quick the flame ran in growing stars from wick to wick, as, with a wax taper tied to the end of a white rod, kneeling before he touched each, he bowed for a moment, then rose to his happy, cheerful labour and ministration! Still the chiming cow-bell jogs and waggles overhead, every cracked tinkle preceded by a rusty drawl and drag, as if some machinery or mechanical help of the old gouty bell-ringer were in pain and travail. And who is in the famed Moorish temples of Vesta, once a mosque? I bet a crown, but myself, no one—yes, the little beggar child kneeling in a trance of prayer by the holy-water basin. Yes, one grey-headed, patched old vine-dresser, who has been down from the mountains with jars full of green grape bunches

for England — my England — how dear the name sounds at this distance off from the chalk-wall cliffs! How he flings himself on his knees at the humble publican's distance from the altar, whose splendour he does not think himself fit to approach—how he bows his old grey bullet head—how death-calm and soothed his wrinkled face, worn into gullies and ravines by the storms of life—how cataleptic that attitude except when the Becket-like priest sails in in his white and cloth of gold, trapped with all the millinery of his church, then he crosses himself rapidly five times, forehead and chest, in memory of the five wounds of Christ, who died for him. Yes, in the darkness of that second chapel there is an old duenna, kneeling carelessly as if going through some ceremony at an opera rehearsal. That old man, I warrant him, with his hemp sandals, hussar jacket, red faja, black cap, staff, and embroidered leather greaves, has a bright little white-washed hut up somewhere in the brown mountains, and has his walls hung with festoons of dull purple raisins, behind which the scorpion hatches her poison eggs. He has a red and yellow saint or two over his window and door, and on the shining walls outside are scarlet strings of pungent capsicums ready for the winter olla, when pomegranate salad is gone, and the melon has grown from green to gold, and from gold to dust. I can fancy this old fellow (Pablo, I dare say, or Perez), about a week before

the vintage, watching with his bell-mouthed trabuco in his reed hut to fire at thieves and slang intruders, just like the abusive "vindemiator" in our old friend Horace, picking the orange just yellowing in October in pyramids ready for its sea trip, or shaking the cochineal insect from its cactus home, or hauling in wallowing silver masses of the janquete fish—the white-bait of Malaga—or selling the soapy, sweet batata ready boiled in the streets, or cutting sweetmeat lengths of the fresh sugar-cane; or, in fact, pursuing any of the other avocations practised by the salt-fish-loving, raisin-drying, bull-fighting, revolutionizing people of Malaga. That sheltered, orange-grove city of which the poet sings—

> "Jewel of the mountain ring,
> City of perpetual spring;
> City that the sea still kisses;
> Where the wind is dower'd with blisses
> From the starry jasmine flowers,
> And the thousand orange-bowers,"—

a greater compliment than the Spaniards pay to Marbella adjoining, so called from Queen Isabella's exclaiming, when she first saw its green hills, pleasant streams, shady groves, and fruitful gardens, "Que mar tan bella (What a beautiful sea)!" The abusive proverb is:

> "Marbella e bella, no entres en ella,
> Quien entra con capa, sale sin ella."
>
> "Marbella is fair, but be wise, have a care,
> If you go with a cloak, you will come out quite bare."

Indeed, every Spanish city has one of these droll diatribes written about it, as Madrid, where they say, "The river is beautiful, if it was not always dry," and of Seville;

> "Quien no ha vista a Sevilla,
> No ha vista a maravilla."
>
> "He who has not seen Sevilla,
> Has not seen a 'Maravilla.'"

And the proverb makers go on to say, slanderously no doubt, that this is the city where

> "The men are fire, and the women are tow,
> Puff—comes the devil—away they go."

This Seville is the city where the moon sets more people on fire than the sun, as I should say, from the quantity of lovers whispering you see on the benches of the public walks. Whether you go to the Alamada by the ruined palace of the dukes of Medina Sidonia, or the bran new orange-planted square of the Constitution, where the band, when they are at a loss, seem always to do what Theodore Hook said a bad whist-player did in the same dilemma, "trump it."

Now, although I am tortured by a toothache which turns my hollow bone into a howling den of pain, I bent my errant steps—human nature is (h)erring, and that is a poor fish—to the ruinous square and unfinished monument in the Plaza del Riego, which commemorates the shooting to death of those un-

lucky émeutists whose fate Carlyle's Sterling, that almost poet, almost novelist, was so nearly sharing. A moment ago the sun seemed double-gilt, the sky a perfect faultless sapphire; now, with this demon in my hollow bones—troublesome as a thief who will sleep in your house to let—with this ache that keeps crying out, "Draw me—draw me!"—I see a sudden fog of Fleet-Street thickness rising over things, like the gauze veils in the solemn part of a pantomime introduction. Somebody inside my tooth keeps tolling, with slow, heavy, but well-timed lugs, the dirge of "Pain, pain, pain," into the thick and turbid-growing air. Now, as I walk down the narrow, stall-crowded street, buffeted by mules pertinaciously disciplined as to their rank of Indian file, I think of all the disagreeable things that have ever happened to me—the disappointments, the frustrations, the golden moments let slip, the golden moments waited for in vain, that accursed check-mate smile the man gave me that I met to-day on business, that choked laugh of successful cunning which my lawyer gave when he parted with me at Southampton: from these hastily sown suspicions, a quick mustard-and-cress crop of fears and dangers spring up round my feet.

Now to battle them. Shall I entrust myself to a local Sangrado, with his bright brass basin notched for the chin, bandaged staff, and razor large as a scimitar? No: for I know he will smile, set to

work, and examine my mouth with snuffy fingers, just as if he was taking a hook out of a fish's throttle. He will take out the wrong tooth, rinse it down the sink-hole with a swash and gurgle before I can identify it, or will struggle with me as if he were fighting with wild beasts at Ephesus, end by upsetting the chair, falling on the top of me, and triumphantly claim two guineas for breaking my jaw. No, I dread the French proverb, and the well-known trickery of dentists, and prefer my pet pain, which has now grown so tame that I can stroke it. I will bear about my secret sorrow, which I should miss if it left me, sometimes even, with extraordinary caprice, rousing it in its lair with the tip of my tongue. No, I will bear it about, proud of my endurance; because it gives me strange glimpses of other phases of life, and because the little lulls, when they do come, are sweet and tranquil as sunshine after rain, as the blue dimples breaking out like forget-me-nots in a gray sky, as the first sight of the first golden lance-head crocus piercing a way out from winter's dark prison-house. So I brave it; as Doctor Waagen says in his Tour, when he gets his patent boots wet through, quoting an heroic line of the Odyssey,—

Bear up, O brave heart, already thou hast borne much.

I determine to forget pain, like the philosopher

who sang a comic song all the while the Grecian tyrant was pounding him to death in the mortar. I climb up the steep, dusty hill, coasting the long lines of low breastworks to that squat, blind Moorish castle, that Blake, winding up his angry mustachios, threatened with his English cannon, and, getting nothing but a bonny blue blink of the bay, squatter down again; and then, leaving the poverty-stricken white houses and the prickly pears of the suburbs, roam out to the lighthouse, that all night long winks with its one inflamed eye to distant and troubled ships, just as an ophthalmic money-lender in a "silver hell" winks to prodigals, quite at sea as to pecuniary matters, and chasing a fourpenny-bit in and out the latch-key in their pockets. I go—and, like a modern Marius, sit on the ruins of myself, there among the great, dull-red, ruby blocks and opaque, slaty sapphires, over which the sea lathers and worries in a musical, refreshing way, troubled, but still with a trouble that is lullabied by the beauty and softness of the climate and the day, and I think of how this very day ten years agone I was sitting in a little Cornish bay, where the headlands are of a rosy granite, and the bases under the sea seem giant blocks of emerald; where the sand was rifted white as snow all round the old broken anchor it choked, and the white-bleached wrecked spars it half embedded. Roused from this, too, by my spurring pain,

that now urges me forward like a second Wandering Jew, I move back past the awninged boats and the wrangling fishermen, to the raisin-packing crowds on the quays, where dusty-footed men are treading in the future Christmas puddings of England with dirty ruthlessness, and I leave these, too, and get to the Alamada, which is close to the sea-shore, only hid from it by a row of houses, in glimpses between which I see its blue plain quivering like the shaken sword of God. And now, as the lamplighters begin to skim about, with their fire tubes fastened to lance-poles, and the water-sellers get noisy and shake their money-tins in an aggravated way, and the boys with the chairs get ostentatiously attentive, the parade fills with dark veiled ladies that seem to tread on air, officers fascinatingly ferocious, portly priests urbanely calm and so forgiving that they bow if you even tread on their oldest corn. And now, as the band begins a music storm, of marrow-bone and cleaver bluster, pretension, and violence, from Verdi, at which all the officers begin to try and pull out their fox-tail mustachios by the roots, and all the ladies to entrench their sharp-shooting eyes behind temporary black fan palisades, I hurry to my hôtel to clothe myself in cheerful, care-dispelling, black evening-dress, to attend an evening party at the Consul's. I throw myself into my pants, I rope my neck with white, I enter the Consul's apartments armed for conquest.

I pass my next few hours, free from tooth or any other ache, in a pleasant dream of coffee drinking, guitar playing, flirting, album viewing, picture seeing. I go back to my hotel, exclaiming with Titus, "I have lost a day, but I have gained a memory."

CHAPTER III.

LOOKING FOR DON QUIXOTE.

I NEVER really got tired of that hot Spanish City of Raisins, where the people were all of a mild liquorice brown colour. My chief objection to it was, that I found the proverb of the Arabs too true,—that Malaga was a perfect Paradise, "only that the fleas are always dancing there to the tunes played by the mosquitoes." It was the fleas, I feel sure, that finally pulled me out of bed and made me send, impromptu, for a calesa to rush violently down a steep place to the quay and embark in the *Alhambra*, P. and O. steamer. Indeed I am convinced that the Turkish saying, that at Galilee lives the King of the Fleas, was really first said of Malaga.

What I went through there, as to finding the place one immense hot Papin's Digester, in which I was perpetually steamed; the hardship of being always driven to drink Manzanilla because the water was lukewarm; the constantly being peppered with the dust from scuffling strings of donkeys laden with boxes of dried raisins, I dare not attempt to tell. But

still, though sore of foot, my face covered with the red itching bumps of mosquito bites so that my own creditors would not have known me,—turned to a brown amber-colour by the furnace sun,—drained by perpetual perspirations and want of the chief nourisher in life's feast (I allude to balmy sleep),—I still carried out with that peculiar tenacity of purpose and bulldog pluck which my friends call obstinacy and my enemies bottom (I mean the reverse, but let it pass), the object of my Spanish tour—looking for Don Quixote.

Now, do not, O matter-of-fact reader, say, as my friend Twitcher fretfully said, "Why, he has been dead, you know, a long time;"—I mean, looking for the Don Quixote type of man, who, if the lean, lanthorn-jawed, warm-hearted Don ever was a type of the best Spanish character, must still exist somewhere; and, therefore, by directory or otherwise, is, I say again (not the least angrily), to be wormed out, in church, market-place, shop, steamboat, posada, or correo (diligence); his chivalry, spiritualism, unworldliness, generosity, unselfishness—in a word, gentlehood—exist, I knew, and I had sworn to find him out; *worm* him out were my words.

Sour, cynical men—men of the Croker class—told me that my quest was humbug (that sort of men never mince matters),—that Spaniards now were all a set of idle, cowardly, bragging, cigar-smoking, bull-fighting, stabbing guitar-players, who spent

their time in gossip or worse things. Other men, like F., of the quiet, shy epicure, dilettante, Tory-prejudiced class, told me that I had quite mistaken the thing (quoting something from Calderon de la Barca); that Don Quixote was no abstract Spaniard, but only a La Manchan; that every allusion to his travels were local, parochial allusions, and that going to Moorish Spain to look for the gaunt, nankeen-faced knight was worse than a delusion; it was a blunder. The Iberians (quoting Strabo) were ludicrously vain, treacherous, blood-thirsty, poor, proud, and cruel. Directly F. left, I took out my "Don Quixote," and proved, smilingly to myself, that F. was wrong and I was right. National types cannot die. Robin Hood still poaches down in Wiltshire; Richard Cœur de Lion only the other day knocked down three Russian generals with the butt-end of his musket at foggy Inkermann. Ten John Bulls, gorgeous in scarlet, I met last week riding to the meet of the Breakneck foxhounds; Beatrices and Rosalinds in Balmoral boots and red and black striped — blanks, will soon muster at Christmas country-houses. No, F., you are shy, oily,—steeped in Spanish proverbs and quaint bits of improper reading; your hits at the Pope, and at Spanish and French bragging and thieving, are dry enough, but you are as prejudiced, insolent an Englishman as ever took twenty years—and all a rich man's appliances—to write a bad and now obsolete guide book.

As for you, Croker, with your Quarterly fits of bile, how happy it must have made you, on your death-bed, to think you caused poor Keats to break that little blood-vessel that sent him to Rome and killed him there. Away, phantoms! F. and C., go to your solitary cells and leave me alone! I start to-morrow by the 10·15, mixed, *viâ* Southampton, the P. and O. bearing me over Biscayan seas to Cadiz, the bright city. What for? Why—to look over Moorish Spain, to see if I can find Don Quixote, the aspiring, the generous, the undaunted; the contemporary of Don John, the descendant of Cortes.

Yes, I said, every ugly inn-drudge, with rough, red arms, I see will be Maritornes; every landlord will be like the knavish Asturian who invented the ingenious reed by which the illustrious man, born after his time, contrived to drink the red wine through his helmet-barred. There shall I see his Dulcinea—round of face and large of limb, at every barn-door sifting maize, there shall I meet Sancho and the barber, the curate, the housekeeper, the black-eyed, tight-waisted niece, and indeed all the pleasant Smollett company. These will be everywhere. I shall see them through whirls of fiery dust, on vine-clad mountain sides, from diligence windows, in fire-coloured boats, on broad blue bags in steamer-cabins, on horseback, with wide jacketed guides, beside droves of red-tasselled tinkling mules, such as fill with itinerant clangour the knubbly

streets of Spanish cities; in fact—as writers say after a long sentence which has taken away their breath—everywhere. But the Don, the loose-limbed, aquiline-nosed Don, with the faded, yet kindling eye, the intermittent teeth, and the raw-boned impracticable horse, I shall have more trouble with him. He will be, perhaps, hidden in some old book-shop at Toledo, devouring—with immense dark-lanthorn spectacles—some worm-eaten book of chivalry—Tirarte the White or Palmerin the Cruel, and writing, by help of spoonful-pinches of the black, fragrant rappee of Seville, a short treatise to show that the great Spanish General, Blake, who, it is not generally known, kicked the French over the Pyrenees, derived all the finer points of his character from the study of Amadis of Gaul; or he may now be some pot-bellied canon living in a little sacristy room in the Archbishop's palace at Seville, and who is writing a folio on Murillo's Concepcion Immaculada, with a slight glance at the history of Art from the time of Dædalus. Perhaps I shall see his old eye firing up at a bull-fight, or meet him at the corner of a moonlit street at Granada, his cloak wrapped round his left arm, defending himself with a guitar only from the swords of ten bravos, two of whom he will brain with that frail weapon. Shall I find him looking at that horrid rascal Gines de Pasemonte, being garotted at Algeciras; or will he be clothed in brown, the pompous governor of some

wasp-nest of a place on the green coast of Morocco, where leather is daily made, and Spaniards are daily tanned?

I may see him cooped up in one of those dreadful covered mail-carts that hold four inside victims, who have no insides by the time they reach their destination, who will have no bowels, in fact, for certainly their driver has none, though he does keep shouting "Ar-r-rè" and "Jaleo," and adjuring the horses Pedro and Pepe, alternately, in the names of saints and quite the reverse, caring no whit for those enormous sixty-pounder melons, not to mention the mule's saddle and the bag of chopped straw that are torturing, squeezing, pounding, and pinching the legs of the four insides, whom I see through the window, squeezing their shot-pouches full of wine into their mouths as if they were trying to express a faint notion of their sorrows on that primitive but touching instrument so dear to us all—the bagpipe. I shall find him cheapening the janquete, those little whitebait fish that shine so like new-cast type in the creel of the Malaga Masaniellos. I shall meet him talking politics with the alguacil at the little marble tables of the demure Spanish café. I shall know him beside the green field of a billiard table, or listening to the evening band in the new Plaza. I shall have much difficulty, but find him I know and feel I shall.

I will not deny I occasionally forget the object

of my search. Once, when I spent an hour under the Moorish horseshoe gate of the Blacksmith at Seville, watching a great black ant dragging a dry white melon-seed into a hole; it was up by Pilate's house, the house some Spanish enthusiast and pilgrim built after the model of the spurious Pilate's house at Jerusalem, which sham, if it did not comfort the Hadji, must have much cheered the architect, whose bill for it was, of course, tremendous. It was lonely and hot, just at the siesta time, and even the old gate-keeper was asleep; the great acacias or carob-trees, with their huge green pods big as scarlet-runners, were flabby with the sun-heat; the bullocks winced before it; the idle soldiers yonder there in the barracks, worn out with perpetual sleeping, yawned and tried to sleep again. There I stood admiring the fidgety haste of that ant, who looked like two large Siamese twin beads grown together, as he struggled over rock, precipice, lake, and hill, with his husky load ten times as big as himself. I compared him (Perkins was licking a cigar) to a page dragging the kitchen fire-screen up and down —at it again, never say die. How I cheered him on: if it had not been for me he would never have done it. Now the load shunted off, and fell helplessly behind an irregular flint; now it shook into a horse pool; how it fell on the ant (evidently Solomon's, Æsop's, and La Fontaine's), and buried him as a child under the ruins of an earthquake; now it

spitefully and viciously, with true Tory unprogressive tendencies, toppled backwards over a clod, but slowly it drawls nearer, nearer. It is in, positively it is in. Bravo! it is in! No, no. Dear me, how unfortunate: it slips down in a three-cornered ridiculous way; fills up the hole, and refuses, positively refuses, to go down, or to compromise the matter in any way at all. Beaten. Majority against you. Gravelled, floored. No, at it again, like the bulldog Jimmy at the last rat of the five hundred in ten minutes—haul—pull—pull with a will. In, by Jove! in. Hurrah! (and I threw up my sombero).

Says Perkins, awaking, "Why, halloa, old fellow, how you startle one! I have been and dropped my fusee."

"He's done it."

"Who's done it? Done what?"

"Hurrah! I'm sure he's an Englishman."

"Who's he? who? You're cracked. You've had a sunstroke."

"He? why, the ant."

"The ant!" said Perkins, the brute, with a grunt of disgust and contempt, stepping back and crushing in, without seeing them, ant, melon-seed, nest, eggs, and all, with his great ox foot.

I could have blown out his brains.

I expostulated. He replied, "Why, how could a fellow see it? It's only an ant: but, I say, what about some bitter?"

Only an ant! Why, the energy, perseverance, and ardour of that ant were worthy of a Cæsar; but there are such men as Perkins, who go about the world treading out people's hearts, brains, and souls, and then saying, "Oh, it's only an ant." I wonder how they treat their uncles?

This was once. Another time was when I watched the dusty-footed perspiring negroes, trampling down the Malaga raisins, surrounded by crowds of dismounted muleteers in chesnut-coloured leather breeches, tight as the skin, and ornamented with rows of silvery buttons down the side. Also, when on a drizzling, foggy morning (something like weather, the engineer, who was from London, grumbled out), I turned my back on pleasant Seville, and steamed up that dismal Lethe stream, the Guadalquiver, on whose low, earthy banks, broad and flat as deserts, scampering herds of half-wild oxen tossed and charged through clouds of dust-smoke, blown up angrily as by some simoom the Arabs had left behind, in the hurry of their packing, and pursued by mounted herdsmen, shouting hoarsely and brandishing their long spears like so many circumscribed Bedouins.

I forgot thee again, O Don of the wavy mustachio and crow's-foot eye, as, in the coloured darkness of that dim cathedral in Hadrian's birthplace, I groped into the cedar-scented sacristy—holy chapels where the candles shone like yellow stars, and silver bells

tinkled solemn warnings to the kneeling women with drooped fans and veiled mantillas. I forgot thee, O exquisite Don, too, for a moment, when I was riding through the raisin country, when I slept in the Alhambra garden, when I plodded up the ramps of the Giralda.

But let me return to where I remembered thee, and sought thee with all the zeal of those childish days when I first read thee through Smollett, and alternately laughed and cried at thy generous blunders and most wise follies, thou proprietor of the craziest head and noblest heart, thou paladin of a scoffing and unbelieving age.

First, in the church. It was a September morning; the sky already, at nine o'clock, bright, clear, and hot as so much fire-water one hundred degrees above proof. I strolled into the market-place of Granada to while away the half-hour which the angel whose breathing we hear in every clock-case was slowly doling out. I determined to try if I could not ferret out among the chattering crowd that Don who played at hide and seek with me. I might find him watching, with lean, hungry eye, while he shaped his rusty mustachio, the shining half-pound of tough beef that would go to form the small olla which would be his scanty dinner at twelve o'clock. I first secured, for the small sum of eight cuatros (about twopence), an immense pot-bellied green melon, tight of skin, and chock full of honey-

juice; I filled my leather bag-pipe bota with the choicest Amontillado, two shillings the bottle, as I tell Binns, to exasperate him, nutty, clear, but not branded; I stow the melon under my seat in the correo, sling my bota on like a Robin-Hood baldric, put a cold fowl in one pocket, and two small loaves of delicious white, cakey, close-grained Spanish bread in the other. I tease everybody at the post-office and booking office with inquiries about the correo, till everybody yawns and slinks away to shady interiors, and then I go out on my old, old fruitless search. I overhaul the green, succulent peppers, and the orange-blooded tomatos, that Providence seems to have lobed and segmented especially for the predestinated cook. I admire those vegetable marrow, purple-white-looking chumbos, that are called Jews' hearts. I retreat from the piles of flaky salted cod, easily nosed in the lobby; I sniff the red-seeded earthy-crusted pomegranates; I eye with ten-horse power of eye the red water-pitchers, with the double horns of spouts, and the thick, dewy, cold perspiration always breaking out on their Arab terra-cotta skins. I squeeze inquiringly the dull-green figs, and weigh the green-gold grapes, on which the ravening wasps prey even as I hold them up in critical admiration. I take mental notes of the water-sellers, with their trays of pence, and of the itinerant bakers with rings of bread upon long kabob skewers, just such as Fadladeen might have carried

in that gorgeous city where the celebrated unlucky cream-tarts were made. I then perform cautious ordeal patrols round the wandering potter, who sits sullenly surrounded by his green-glazed pipkins and cream-coloured pans, like an Israelite praying amid the brick-kilns of Pharaoh. I shun the one-eyed beggar with the guitar, and the dirty gipsy-chief with Indian blanket and gold earrings, though he does govern a thievish tribe in the hill-caves round the Alhambra towers; for some say, though now a blacksmith, he was once a leading murderer in José Maria's notorious gang, and he is not quite a man to rub elbows with, if you carry purse or valuables.

But, all at once finding the Don had again slipped out of my reach, and stolen home with his half-pound of lean meat under his threadbare cloak, which he laps in the true Roman and Iberian way proudly over his left shoulder, I follow a breath of incense, which seems to blow direct out of the gates of Paradise, and draws me with gentle violence, as good influences draw us, to the wide door of the cathedral, thrown open for early mass. That breath of angels winds through the rugged, garlicky, jostling, ignoble crowd, and picks me out—me, the meanest in Israel. I follow it as the old chivalric seekers for the mystery of the sacred chalice (the Sainte Graal) followed all miraculous calls, whether of singing bird, or vocal flower, or current air, or calling water. I here may find the Don, at last the Don, his old



SCENE IN THE CHURCH, GRANADA.

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horny knees bent before some painted waxwork Saint Iago—some daub of Saint James smiting the Saracen—his fevered eyes, the soul of them flown to heaven, turned absently towards the priest in white and gold, and the kneeling acolyte with the giant psalter, all a-shine with unfading colour. "I shall find him," I said, aloud. "You won't," said an echo.

"I will, or I'll be blanked."

"You will be blanked, reprobate, if you go on like that," replied the conscience echo.

I, persistently bowing my head under the great Churrigueresque portal, was washed in by a spring flood of impatient worshippers. What a sight it was to see littered over the broad-chequered floor of that huge mausoleum of truth (I was getting Protestant and cynical, the correo was so long coming), flocks of kneeling, or rather prostrate, ladies, their black fans working like undertakers' plumes on a clearing-up day after a great, good, rich man's funeral, strewn about in groups before the mouths of the side-chapels, where cross lights shone and glowed, or kneeling in agonies of downcast sorrow at the silver railing that warded in the high altar, where Madame Tussaud seemed to have been especially busy, though her work had rather an infantile fantoccini puppet character, as if she had done it when rather young and frivolous. Side by side with the highest ladies in Granada, crawled hideous

cripples, their dirty crutches lying beside them, like so many monsters at the Beautiful Gate, returning thanks to God for recent miraculous cures; or real Lord Aldboroughs and Bishops of Jamaica recently healed by some Spanish Holloway!

"It is all hypocrisy," said I, vulgarly sneering, and turning to smell at a picture of that great religious rascal, Cano's.

"Caridad, caridad, per l'amor de Dios," said a subterranean toad-voice at my feet. "Charity, charity, for the love of God?" Why, this was a rebuke from heaven.

"But where to find it, my poor woman?" said I, with a sigh.

She was a crippled old hag, with no mantilla; her handful of grey hair was drawn back into a sort of Tartar-knot. She was seated humbly on the ground, her worn crutches were under her lean, naked arms. She got her living, did my unconscious rebuker, by lifting up the great quilted, padded, leather curtain, greasy and black-brown, for those worshippers, true or false, who wanted to pass from the nave of the great cathedral to the inner Virgin's chapel.

Instantly, as if to reward me, the sinful Gretchen of this interlude, burst out the organ, with its quire of exulting angels. I caught myself actually bowing to return the compliment.

Good woman! how she fell to at her beads. I

was wrong. Here is one of a religious race, and so are those poor market-women, who, coming in and kneeling beside their baskets of sweet herbs, snatch an earful or two of the nasal mass.

"Charity, for the love of Heaven, Señor!" doled out the woman again.

I gave her a cuatro. She held out her skinny palm for more, and shook and waggled her grey head mockingly.

I remembered the old Ford specific, and bowing, exclaimed, "Perdoname, hermana mia, per l'amor de Dios." (Pardon me, my sister, for the love of Heaven). She bowed as I reluctantly slipped a peseta in her hand, in gratitude for her moral lessons; she heaped what I thought were blessings on me. When I got home I unpacked my memory, consulted the dictionary, and found what the good old woman had really said was, "Quede usted con diablo, Don Fulano" (May you remain with the devil, Don Thingumbob). "Calavera atolondrado" (Empty noodle). "Mucha bulla para nada" (Much ado about nothing). "A los pies de mi señora" (My respects to your wife). "Viejo rey Wamba" (Old King Wamba). "Venida en batea" (Looking as if you came on a waiter).

Oh, the dreadful old woman!

How I did look about that cathedral for the Don: in the parroquia, or parish church, which opened out of it, and which had a snug clique service all to

itself; in the royal chapel, where Ferdinand and Isabella lie praying eternally for Spain that so much needs their prayers; at the broad marble water-stoup, where the true believers dipped their brown fingers, and crossed themselves on brow and breast, quick as a juggling pass; in the silent unused choir, where the dark-carved thrones of the seven deadly sins were, and where the blazoned books lay open for the simoniacal bishop to intone out of. He stood not at the vacant lecterns, nor was he (for I inquired) up, looking over the organist's shoulder, in the dusty organ-loft. He was not in the stone recess of a pulpit; he was not behind the gilded purclose railing, or behind the reredos, with the rows and classes of church-militant saints drawn up on parade in niche and on shelf. He was not looking at the Virgin, gay in opera satin and tinsel crown; nor at that Saint Sebastian, of the lively buff-colour, smeared with red from the arrow-wounds.

"Where is he?" I said, half aloud, and an hotel-waiter behind me replied, "Perhaps, señor mio, at the Fonda Europa."

I replied, "I thought not," and went peering about again. There, where the crowd was thickest round the chapel rails, and where the ministering shaven-headed priest in the white-satin robe, with the great cross of gold tissue on his back, stood with a villanous-looking rogue of a deacon to hold the enormous winged book, and troops of white-clad acolytes to

light and snuff out candles, to ring soulless, unfeeling bells, to bow and kneel according to receipt. There is Guzman, my landlord, a little, mean, bill-broking Jew, who tempts you to beat him, he looks so mean, rat-like, and thievish; there is the Don—no—but my lean guide in the Marseilles jacket, and round black cap. I am afraid they have come to get joint absolution for having cheated me. There is Quesada (not Quixote) kneeling and sitting back on his own legs, watching that young votary who is passing out through the beggar crowd at the door; his eyes wander—perhaps his mind.

But for once, just in the shadow of this great picture of the Crucifixion, by Murillo, let us be charitable, and not act as witnessing spirits against our weaker brothers. Life is short, it is hard to get wise, harder to get good—harder still, having got good, to remain so.

I hurry back in a nervous perspiration for fear I should be too late for the correo, and find it not yet come. Yes; it is just putting to. I shall find him there. I hear the mule-bells clash and tinkle warningly. Time and correos wait for no one. I get in, huddle back the melons and straw bags under the seat, and effect leg-alliances with my three fellow-travellers, who, before we are a good league up the red earth-hills studded with vines, begin squeezing crimson threads out of their wine-bags, some of which go into their mouths, but a percentage of

which soak in blots into their shirt-fronts, or spurt up on to the carriage roof, and descend in vinous rain, inclining me to do as Lord Bacon used to do in a shower, and take off my hat to receive the benediction of Heaven. But what was the correo like, wherein I made a journey from Granada to Loja to look for Don Quixote? It was like a covered market-cart projected on the basis and body of a small stage-coach. Four sufferers inside, knee to knee,—no room to stir a leg, to remove the exquisite torture of the os coccygis,—and three persons, including the driver, seated on the front seat, which formed the front wall of our interior,—the three persons being specially adapted to jam out all air. Inside, to sleep was impossible, not to sleep was impossible. Outside, the heat was as of a fire-wind. Stir, breathe, sleep, read, or move, was in the inside difficult. No one of my fellow-travellers could be the Don, I was sure, for I read the names on their luggage.

I can imagine how that real self-denying gentleman the Don, who never tried to give pain to any one, would have tried to appear cheerful, and have coiled up his long legs, anxious to incommode nobody, but longing to be once more on Rosinante; how he would have beguiled the time by twiddling his mustachios, and telling stories of Don Belianis of Greece, and Tristan the love of Yseult; and railing, with generous ardour, at the treachery of Sir Galaaor,

after he escaped from Fez with the emir's daughter. But my companions were three poor ignoble Spaniards, in dirty waiter-jackets; blue of chin, mean of face, all day bagpiping their wine-bags, and cutting up cold quails with immense dagger-knives, which they took from their dirty red sashes, which smelt of garlic. Then they sliced up a melon, gnawed at the section, and flung the rind out of the window at barelegged boys, who ran after us for pence, then they rolled perpetual cigarettes, subsiding into restless jogging sleeps. Happy for us, when we changed horses, at the house where the strings of hot red peppers hung up to dry against the whitewashed wall, so that we might have, if only a minute's change of position. I remember it was so blistering and screeching hot, that I ran for shelter to the narrow slant bar of shade cast by some post, though it only took in one of my legs, and left the other with the sensation of being dipped into boiling water. Then, at last driven from that refuge, I tore into the posada stable, where the mules' halters were tied up to pegs made of ham bones, and where the muleteers were snoring on the stones, wrapped in their cloaks. Yet not even here did any one answer to my description of Don Quixote.

Nor at the venta that I rode into at noon of the next day, followed by my guide—where the paving-stones were red hot, and the ground dazzling and blinding with the sun. The two rooms of the small

inn opened right and left from the courtyard, whose gate I entered, the one a kitchen, the other a store-room. I called for dinner; they had everything but beef, mutton, veal, and fresh pork. An idiot girl, who watched me as if I was a new sort of cannibal, pointed up at a ham hanging from the rack rafter, and then began to cluck and cackle like a hen. I accepted the omen, and called for ham and eggs. A crowd of idle muleteers and vine-dressers gaped and pointed at me. To appear at ease, I took off my gloves, smoothed out the fingers, brushed my hat with my arm, looked down at my boots, and beat my legs with my riding-whip. All these performances were received with approval. The children grinned, the men smiled at each other, as much as to say, "He is very like one of nosotros (of us) after all."

Intense was the excitement I caused in that little inn. Everything had to be fetched; everything was *malapropos*, un-Spanish, and out of season, hour, and place, that I wanted. Water to wash,—a dozen red jars, knotted with cord, were sent on the heads of girls, half a mile off, to the street fountain, where the water was almost boiling with the heat. The eggs were to be sought for in the stable-mangers and hay-scented lofts. The ham was to be cut and cooked. As for the melon, I knew where that came from; for the landlord, putting on his hat with the air of a resolute and determined traveller, went out for it, and returned, after ten minutes, greasily triumphant,

with a large speckled one, like a bloated aldermanic lizard, in a net. With what homely and ridiculous affectation of delighted hospitality did he, the crafty Manchegan, instantly cut me a slice, to stay my appetite, remarking something about the gusto! As for the idiot, she was chucklingly busy with the eggs; and the hard-featured mother, who every moment pointed with a fork at the frying-pan, and then turned round to me and grinned, was fussily blowing up with a plaited straw firescreen a smoulder of charcoal that gradually kindled up and grew to a lively burning crimson, flickering wavy yellow. At last came the dishing-up, when, at a central rickety deal table, I sat down to a basin of poached eggs, floating like golden rafts on a sea of black grease in which were stranded square dark chips, like so many Madras catamarans with all hands lost. Then followed grapes, real golden-skinned globes filled with unadulterated fairy wine of precious powers, and waxy figs, of a viscous sweetness, tasting like great sweetmeat puddings. Then came the melon, marked in grooves by nature for the knife, and with a yellow nectarous fluid. But I forget the wine: that took at least half an hour getting, because the landlord kept no wine himself, and had quarrelled or run in debt with every other landlord for a mile round. But he at last came back—his path marked with perspiration—griping the bottle with his hot streaming hand. I bowed, drew out the stopple of smashed

vine leaves, and poured him and myself out a glass. He drank it; and, smacking his lips, with a wink at his wife, as much as to say, "How I shall stick it on when it comes to the bill!" proceeded to mop himself all over with a dirty tablecloth, lying ready for the lavendera, or washerwoman. I found the wine a fiery, sweet, luscious Malaga wine, not unlike brandied raisin. As I went up the creaking loft stairs, for a two-hours' siesta,—for I had to ride on horseback from there over the mountains,—I saw the landlord get down the inkhorn and begin my bill.

He had just sanded it when I came down to proceed on my journey. I won't say much about it; but it was the most imaginative bill I ever perused. Never was the hot walk of a fat landlord so amply atoned for. I had mounted my mule, the guide's saddle-bags were adjusted, my Marseilles jacket was tied in front of my saddle, the whole inn was drawn up to see me depart into yonder hazy glow of sunlight that fills up the road like a fog. I suddenly bethink me of something I had forgotten. "Señor Landlord, can you tell me if there is a Don Quixote living anywhere near this town?"

"Quixote?" replies the landlord, thrusting my money into his pocket; "no, I never heard the name."

* * * * *

My next search for the Don was in the shops of Cordova. Perhaps, I thought, the old veteran,

ruined by some accident of the late French war, has had to sell off his horse and greyhound, and come to this old sultan's city to gain an honest penny, and save his grey hairs from disgrace. "I *will* find him," I said, drawing my Leghorn hat over my eyes, and shouldering my green umbrella bordered with scarlet, with which I used to defy the searching sun-enemy of unaddled brains.

I looked in at the print-shops. There were pictures of tight-booted grisettes with round arms and hawk's eyes; saints by the dozen, enough for all the sinners' houses in Cordova; simpering glossy-coloured Murillos; a portrait of the Queen of the Sandwich Islands, who is believed to be of Spanish descent—the very image of an unhealthy sow with piggy sensual eyes, flapping mouth, and an acre of coarse yellow cheek. There was the Emperor, too, of the Billiard-marker Islands, with his caricature-nose, and thievish, vulture eyes stealthily cruel; and there was the King of the Indigo Country, who looked like a sottish martinet, a mixture of pipe-clay and champagne. As I gazed at a picture of the Leviathan, side by side with a sketch of Majos dancing at the great fair of Seville, the proprietor came to the gilded door for a breath of air. Heavens! the Don! Why, it is a huge Eugène-Sue sort of Frenchman, with a stiff black beard, cropped head, and bullet eyes. Why it is no more the Don than it is the Dneiper. I go in, however, and purchase portraits of that vulgar Her-

cules Bomba, and that snubby ignoble the Grand Duke of Florence, that I may add them to my collection of royal portraits to show what sort of men the nations choose to rule over them as specimens of their highest virtue, intellect, and capacity.

A little daunted, I look into the barber's shop opposite. There is an officer seated in an arm-chair on a sort of throne, his head—the back of which fits into a hollow in the chair—facing the barber's guitar, which lies ready on the shelf for customers who are obliged to wait. The busy Figaro—war-dancing round the unhappy man, who is veiled and bearded with snowy, frothing lather—holds up to his stiff, black, bossy chin—what—yes, it is—my beautiful, my own!—the veritable brass basin of Mambranto that the Don mistook for an enchanted and villanous knight's helmet, and wore many a hot day on the brown La Manchan sierras. There is the curved bite out of the circle for the chin. It is—it is—the Don.

I watch from behind the windows rows of red oils and French pomato-pots, dusty wigs and false mustachios. The Don rises, and, still all lathery and hidden, turns to the corner brass-tap basin to wash and be clean. I see his arm circle with that extreme tail-corner of the towel (the Spaniard is, as to washing, slightly hydrophobic). He turns. The Don? No! It is that old leathery-faced general,

with the cast-steel eyelids and pinched mouth, evidently a mean, bouncing disciplinarian, only great at court-martials and in the presence of trembling beggar soldiers in yellow jackets and hempen sandals. Go to! That is old General Whiteliver, who ran away from the Moors at Melilla, and was all but broken, only he bribed the commandant to depose that the Moors were four thousand stronger than they were. Oh, chivalry of Spain! buried under the waves at Lepanto; is the diver yet born that shall bring thee up from that brave wreck and welter of dead heroes?

What stores did I not visit? Certainly that lemonade store, where a dirty red curtain with forked fringe flaunted at the door, and where a Barbary monkey, chained by the middle, gibbered in impotent malice at Lorita, the red and green paroquite from the Brazils, that sat scratching its topknot with grave sagacity and contemplative approval, while the jacketed proprietor smokes a cigarette with that calm indifference to custom peculiar to the half-Moorish Spaniard, who spends all to-day in talking of to-morrow, when every good thing is to be done, and everything set right. The golden age is always to-morrow (mañana).

It is getting dark as I walk past the mat-shops, where, like Turks squatted on their hams, the master, surrounded by his 'prentices, like a father by his children—oh, simple-hearted, wrong-headed coun-

try!—sits watching the plaiting and weaving of the red, brown, and yellow fibres of the Juncos (reeds), that form such pleasant covers for floors in their hot climate, though they do harbour ambuscades of assassin fleas: how rich-coloured, hard, dry, cool, and clean they look. There is no Don there, I sigh, for the master is a bullet-headed knave, patiently crafty and money-getting. The chivalrous respect for women is not in him—he curses the girl who brings him fire for his cigar.

What is this next door? A lottery stall, with eager shirt-sleeved peasants conning long ledger files of thick, black, treacherous-looking numbers? A money-changer's, with bowls of gold pieces, netted over, so that they look like canaries in wire cages? No! A guitar-shop. Look at the rows, twenty deep, of raw guitars, unstained, unbrowned, unstrung; no pegs in; music, as yet, dumb within them, but still there, as the future man is in the child. There is Pajez at the bench, fitting in the ivory lines of the finger-board, but there is no Don Quixote.

I pass on to the drapery shops, where the red sashes float and stream, and the broad Andalucian plaids are displayed, with their lines of pink and brown, black and yellow. He is not there, nor behind those strings of mules laden with thick table-slabs of cork. Where can he be? I pass shops where fish is frying in large, hissing pans; church

furniture shops—all beads, crosses, and tinsel; old picture shops; dagger shops; cigar shops; stalls of manuscript music; old book shops, where there are wonderful pictures of the triumph of the Spanish fleet at Trafalgar, and the destruction of El Milordo Nelson, or the deeds of Cochrane (the Bugbear, as the frightened peasants of the coast called him). But nowhere the Don—nowhere the brave, old, slightly crazed, generous gentleman, rousing from books to action, at the end of life, throwing by his reading torpor, and great to do or suffer.

"Perhaps," said I to myself, staring hard at the unfading Spanish sun, "I am looking, after all, for what is not; seeking for life in a dead country, seeking for a live hero in a country of dead voluptuaries." Then for the thousandth time, as I got to my hotel, and sat down on the edge of my iron bed to pull off my weary boots, I crooned out that delightful beginning of a never-tiring book:

"En un lugar de la Mancha, de cuyo nombre," &c. . . . . "adarga antigua, rocin flaco, y galgo corredor."

"In a part of la Mancha, whose name it is unnecessary to record, by no means long ago, lived an hidalgo, whose riches were—a lance over his chimney-piece, an old target, a lean jade of a horse, and a greyhound that he kept for coursing!"

A knock at the door.

"Is it anything you're after wanting, sur-r?" said the Irish waiter.

"Call me at six."

To look for the Don?

I think not.

CHAPTER IV.

A RIDE THROUGH THE RAISIN COUNTRY.

It was starlight when I and El Moro the guide rode out of Malaga towards Granada, the Moorish city of pomegranates. It was three o'clock of an August morning, and the soft deep blue darkness of the Andalucian firmament was punctuated with golden and diamond stars that seemed to wink at me as, half-sleepily, I tugged-to my carpet-bag, eventually, after a hard struggle, got the better of it and locked it with a chirping click of triumph. I descended the silent stone stairs of the Fonda Europa, thinking of Gil Blas's scampish but amusing night adventures, fell over two pails and one pair of boots, and especially a tin dust-pan that maliciously, as if it had been waiting to do me an ill turn, tipped up and hit me on the shin, as, singing a song of the Cid, I groped my way down the marble-paved hall, and debouched at the left-hand side door of the now silent diligence office, where the shuffle and pawing of hoofs indicated the presence of horses.

But I must go back, or I shall never get on with

the story of my wonderful ride through that enchanted Moorish country. My ride came to me thus. I and Major Hodgins, of the Mounted Bombardiers, at present stationed at the Rock (as subs, with half-fretful love, call Gibraltar), had come to Malaga from Bailen, the scene of the only real victory over the French the Spanish ever gained in the late Peninsular War. Tired of the City of Raisins, "for certain raysuns of our own," as that horrid punster Hodgins would ridiculously keep saying, we determined, *coûte qui coûte* (which Hodgins interprets, "if cheques upon Coutts' are worth anything"), to push on at once, hot and fast for Granada, the city of the Moorish palace. Before we had well got down our muscatel grapes and white bread, we hurried to the diligence office, invited by a red-lettered board inscribed with the names of a dozen or two cities. Severe old Don, on the verge of fogyism, looked at us over his stern steel spectacles, and referred to endless books, muttering as he looked. It was no use; people were hurrying back from bathing and the bull-fight, from Malaga on the coast to inland Granada — there were no seats for fifteen days. Imagine no conveyance, or, rather, no places vacant, from London to Derby for fifteen days! My blood rose to two hundred and fifty in the shade.

"Thousand murders!" says Hodgins, "what a dirty, blackguard country this is, with no seat on the cars for fifteen days!"

The Don grew offended at our impatience, closed his books, nibbed his pen, and, refusing to answer any further applications, began piling up a Nelson column of figures and then running up red lines with his pen as if he was climbing a ladder. In vain we slung to the mahogany rails of his desk, and through the bars put imaginary cases of possible misfortunes attendant on fifteen days' delay in that fire-damp city. Don Fulano was deaf and dumb. In vain we talked about the Swiss system of Supplements, which were put on the road as postscripts for residue travellers who could not be accommodated by the first diligence. In vain we enlisted allies in the shape of a voluble negro boots in a yellow jacket, who, with a shoe in one hand and a brush in the other, addressed entreaties to Don Fulano worthy of Cicero in his best days. In vain he was joined by a friendly one-eyed touter, in a rusty black-craped hat, who threw himself into pathetic attitudes worthy of the old judicial Roman mimics who did the gestures while Cato did the speaking. All they did was to drive the Don almost to personal violence. The black Cicero fled before his uplifted inkstand, the Cyclops touter before his brandished stick. After some quieter diplomacy, however, and the shovel-boarding of a stray half-dollar, Don Fulano grew more civil. Don Denaro had done what neither Cicero nor Demosthenes could, and softened the irritated pride of a small Spanish official. Hodgins was for going back at once to Gib.

Gib was, after all, a jolly, though a "drunky" place: Gib was not so bad, after all, if you liked "unlimited loo and perpetual bitter." The billiard-tables were good; but the cricket-ground and race-course could only be accurately defined as "bobbish:" they cer tainly did not go beyond "bobbish."

Joy, joy in Avelon! Don Fulano erases the name of an old woman, who can safely be defied, and whose fifteen days are of no importance, and inserts ——? name. "Whose name, Señor?" Hodgins and I looked at each other. We agree to toss up. Don Fulano puts his pen behind his ear, and huddles up to the rails to see the "sortes," the old divination by lot. Up goes the dollar in a silvery somersault.

"Heads or tails? Man or woman?"

"Woman," I cry.

It comes the Queen of Spain, and I win.

Hodgins, before convivial and noisy, looks blank, —talks of Gib, and going back. "Cursed country! D— mosquitoes! Perpetual stink of garlic. Filthy bed—can't sleep. Nothing to eat. Go back—old Gib."

My name is inserted, and spelt so that my own godfather wouldn't know it.

I drew Hodgins apart into the little den of my friend the negro boots. I propose to him to follow the Consul's plan, that he mentioned when we last met, and that he should hire two horses and a guide, and ride over the spur of the Sierra Nevada by way of Velez—Malaga, and Alhama (Byron's Alhama),

to Granada—fairyland country—sugar-canes, oleanders, Arabian nights, &c.

"And perhaps get murdered?" said Hodgins, taking his cigar-case. "I don't seem to see it. Riding, when off duty, is a baw; too much of it makes one saw, 'pon my soul it does."

"My dear fellow," said I, with a quiet diplomatic smile, "I only said this to try you. I will be knight-errant, and ride over the mountain, as you will not let me over-ride your objections. I start to-morrow morning at three; you at twelve to-night. You will be fourteen hours going, I two days; but *n'importe*:

'Come what, come may,
Time and the tide wear out the roughest day.'"

"Delightful plan," said Hodgins, gaining heart. "Bravo, old boy! I admire your pluck: I honour your 'bottom.' I have a great mind to go with you. Good-bye. I'll go and order a cold fowl and a melon, to take with me for the night, for I shan't sleep a wink."

Hodgins was a lady's man, and a polite man, but self-denial was not a thing he had learnt in Gib. If I had been murdered in the mountains, he would have said: "Bless my soul! Poor devil! I thought he was doing a foolish thing. I am sorry I cannot stop for his funeral; I must be back, you know, at Gib; I am due on guard."

My preparations were soon made. I filled my flask with ambery Amontillado, and ordered some

biscuits. El Moro was to knock at my door at half-past two. Till then—it was now six—what to do? I read Ford and Don Quixote for half an hour; then got out on the balcony, and listened to the military band performing a dirge in the Alameda for some Don Donothing; watched the ladies with the fluttering fans, the priests and soldiers. Then, as it got darker, I sat on my chair and marked the houses opposite—so open and transparent—each window a little domestic picture. That shop at the bottom, with the luminous red curtain before the door, is the barber's; a little toy brass basin dangles over the threshold. The barber is a Madrid man, for I can hear him lisp his *th's* as the Northern Spaniards do, calling it Castilian, much to the contempt of Andalucians. That sort of stable-door next it with an iron grating over the top, there being no visible window at all, is the entrance to a billiard-room; for now the lamps are lit up and down the street of the King's Fountain, I can see the luminous golden green cloth and the ivory balls running about, knocking their heads together. There is a great hum of voices in the street, but no fierce defiant whistling or rebellious street cries, impudent and insulting. That place opposite, with the wide open doorway, is the diligence office; the boards at the door-posts are painted with red letters on a white ground, and remind me of the diamonds in a pack of cards. Those quiet, chatty burgesses seated on

chairs at the door are people waiting to go by the Madrid diligence at eight o'clock. Part of them are El Tato's quadrille (gang) of bull-fighters, going back to Madrid; they would be pleasant company, and full of stories of gladiator daring, such as short-sighted Nero would have rejoiced to see through the emerald spy-glass we are told he used. I ring the bell, order up some preserved peaches in syrup, pour out a deep draught of wine and water, and amuse myself by listening to the new sounds and seeing the new sights. Hodgins lodges opposite. I know his room, because he rushed in only this morning, and dragging me to the balcony, said, pointing to a certain *vis-à-vis* window:

"Do you see that room where there's a hat on the table?"

"Yes."

"Well, that is moine. When you want me, call across: if I don't answer make a speaking-trumpet of your hands, and, bedad, call again."

I look now—there is Hodgins kneeling on a fat portmanteau, and in an agony as of mortal conflict. How red his face is! I shout, "Halloh! Hodgins." He answers:

"Coming in a brace of shakes!"

Till he comes I amuse myself with watching a student at the opposite window, who, in his shirt sleeves (for the evening is intensely warm and full of slow fire) is writing hard and fast. Is it a treatise

on Calderon, or an attack on the ministry, a life of Narvaez, a sketch of Zumellacaragui, or the French war, or what? Will the prize he sweats for be brain fever or glory—a full purse or a debtor's prison? Why should these students get rich when the mere pleasure of writing, with all the bubble hopes glittering and floating around one's aching head, is a pleasure so pure, untiring, and near to rapture?

No Hodgins: he is discussing a little with Mr. Fortywinks, the fussy, voluble man, who professes to be travelling to write a book on Spain, and tells everyone he was in that hotel at Madrid that fell last Tuesday—"an adventure, he presumes;" when we tell him the age of adventures is past. So I determine to save up my system for the next day's fourteen hours in the saddle, slip under the pink mosquito curtains, and try to sleep, though the hour is supernaturally early. First one side, then the other; the curtains make it so close and hot, and there is such a hum in the street; but I dare not shut the glass windows, for there is no chimney in the room. I determine to sleep. I clench my eyes, and think fixedly of nothing, I try all the old tricks, count till I outrival Cocker, Bidder, Babbage, and De Morgan. I try to wear myself out with staring at a veil of darkness. I fancy smoke rising from my naval in a blue, wavy column. I know that when I get my mind to the focus of

a single thought, unbroken and entire, that one thought will be sleep. But all these mental efforts rouse me to quite a creative state of wakefulness. Now, at last, I am getting into a fancy of sinking on my back through miles of dark sea, in search of the flaw in the Atlantic telegraph, when the door burst open, and Hodgins enters.

"Farewell, old boy! I admire your pluck—'pon my soul, you'll have a delicious ride—let me have Ford, it will be in your way. They're putting the horses to. Good-bye, God bless you! We shall meet again at Philippi."

He was gone. I heard the old diligence ten minutes after roll, toss, and jumble off on its fourteen-hour course.

I fell asleep, and when a sharp hurrying knock of El Moro woke me, I did as I have before told you.

"Full purse and full stomach never tire," said El Moro, a dry, thin old young man, in a gray jacket.

"A merry heart goes all the day," said I, capping him from the divine Villiams.

Now I had taken the greatest possible precaution the day before to get the best horse in the landlord's stable, knowing that a long and even dangerous ride lay before me. I had gone into the dark shrine of Jupiter Ammonia, all but arm and arm with the negro boots in the yellow jacket before named, and had had my pick of the line of sullen-eyed lank steeds, that eyed me and pulled at their chains as

I passed behind their rows of heels. I rejected the special horses pointed me out by the Boots, and fixed on an able-bodied, good-natured, robust black cob, sound of wind and limb, and able, I was sure, from his sinewy flank, to bear much fatigue. I chose him in a solemn way, and when El Moro, the guide, was brought to me for inspection and approval likewise, I mentioned that black cob, and announced my choice.

He quite agreed to it, yet now, when I get out of the shadow of the houses into the clear starlight, that seems all in a glowworm flutter and twitter, at the first chill of dawn, will you believe it, I find myself hoaxed, cheated, and duped into a vile, flea-bitten gray, with a hiccuping stumble, that seizes him at regular intervals of four minutes. I am, however, afraid of disturbing the temper of El Moro, as I am at his mercy for nearly two days, so I pocket the insult, and go hiccuping on. If I hint at hiccup's infirmity, stolid El Moro asserts he is "muy fuerte" (very strong), a horse of fortitude that never tires, and quotes the proverb, "He who goes on, gets there," and tying his saddle-bags pinchingly tighter, remarks that "fast bind is fast find," or, as he rhymes it, "Quien bien ata, bien desata." There is something Quixotic in him as he clinks over the trottoir, erect and lean, in his gray jacket, his neat shoes with rusty spurs in them, a good apple-twig for a switch, and my red and green umbrella

fastened at his pummel above his own cloth jacket, which he keeps for the cold mountains, when we shall get near the all but perpetual snow patches of the Sierra. There is a determined gravity and caution, as of a Hadji or Bedouin guide, in his air. His black turban cap is tied on by a string fastening under his beardless chin. If I stop a moment behind he turns to look after me. He is as faithful, dull a Sancho as English traveller ever had.

It is very quiet in the streets; the lamps burn dim as yellow flowers with glowworms inside them; the trot, and clatter, and dust of our horses' hoofs sound quite startling in the hush of the night. The drowsy sentinels in the brown coats try to look vigilant and suspicious when they see us. We clink along the dusty Alameda with the faded acacias and deserted seats: pass hundreds of grated windows and closed shops: chink and scuffle alternately past merchants' houses and over public walks, and come out at last by the broad quay, where the beplumed waves, a little white and angry about the lips, seem complaining, and asking where the men are gone who all day sift maize into heaps, crush raisins into tubs, and toll melons in and out of ships,—where the little terracotta images of boys that all day dive and splash off these brown rock slabs,—where the striped awninged boats and the barefooted fishermen?

We amble; our pace is not fast, because the horses have got fourteen hours of it before them. Under

the castle whose low lines of wall, much as when Blake threatened it, look down from the dusty hill that commands the town, with a black spot, like a full-stop or a coffin-nail, here and there standing for a gun. The white column of the lighthouse by the quarantine harbour, where the deadly yellow flag flies, is to the right; reminding me, though I can hardly believe it, that it is the same place that I spent an hour at this morning, down at the jetty-head, watching the blue waves race up to kiss and tease the land; when the distant hills looked like brown velvet and solid amethyst, as they were either far or near. Then there was that great American steamer there, with one great red port-hole open, as if it had received a red stab which would not heal,—now all mystery and dimness, that clears, however, every moment. One mule, laden with grass-net panniers of charcoal, is all that passes us till we get past the first poor suburb cottages and get out into the broad sea-shore road, which is a foot deep in thick lava dust.

There rises a great whirl of dust in the distance, answering to that which clouds from our eight hoofs; and suddenly a string of donkeys bear down upon us by twos and threes, and in clumps of eight and ten. Now our trouble begins, for they raise a dust so thick that the distant ones become quite invisible, and it is difficult to avoid them, but for the monotonous clip-clap, ding-dong bell that the leader-

donkey wears consequentially round his neck. These are donkeys from the vineyards round Velez-Malaga, bringing the Christmas raisins of England for shipment at Malaga, where the holds of dozens of ships gape and cry for them, that the vessels may depart and be early at the Mincing-lane market. Every donkey carries twelve small square deal boxes, six on each side of his panniers, which rest on a padded pack-saddle. Every donkey has a head-stall, or fillet or shaving-brush of red, with plaited ornaments or cruppers of red and rhubarb yellow, that give them an oriental and novel look. Let the donkey be of a silvery-gray or brown, and scrubby as an old hair portmanteau that has been rubbed into sore patches, still there was always the pink shaving-brush on the forehead, the smart neck-trapping, or the black and yellow crupper.

As for the drivers—for there were generally two and a boy to each half-dozen donkeys—they were not all Andalucians, with linen jackets and black round caps, but many of them Valencians and Asturians, wearing the loose white linen drawers and plaids of their province,—wild, elf-haired, hard, brown men, generally, doubled up and riding on side-saddles, their bandaged and sandalled feet jogging recklessly to the caterpillar propulsive jog of the favoured donkey,—generally the one with the clinking bell. You always saw their approach indicated by the red sparks of their cigarettes breaking through the white

dust clouds that wrapped them. As to the raisin-boxes, which were all stamped and branded, they were banded together with grass ropes. The boys ran by the sides of the donkeys, shouting out their names—Pepe, or Juan, or Maraquita—for endearment, and occasionally thwacking a truant beast that stayed to nibble gluttonously at a roadside patch of Indian corn or some thorny-looking bush that stuck itself spitefully out of the black wayside sand. It was a sorry meal, but then the epicure, you must remember, was only an ass. Poor creature! he had never read a cookery-book. That was denied him! Every now and then, as the endless troop after troop, with more or less speed, scuffled and jostled past, I heard a lusty ballad about a certain Don Antonio or El Campeador, break out and quicken into a chorus, nasal but stirring.

"These were the raisins that will smoke at many a Christmas table at home. I shall see them at Mrs. R.'s and Mr. T.'s, and shall little think that those were the old friends I saw doling along in the deal boxes on the sea-shore of Malaga. I now am burning hot, then I shall be pinched with cold, and amidst a crowd of eager, happy, boyish faces, shall forget all about Hiccup, my Rosinante, and grave El Moro."

Now and then, at a bend of the sea-side road, which sloped down to the sea, where a stranded Dutch ship still held up one drowning arm out of the water, we would come to a patient donkey standing

by an alarmed boy kneeling over a white pile of square brick-shaped boxes, which had fallen to the ground owing to some unlucky flaw in the cord that is usually twisted and knotted a thousand times round, over, and under the precious cases that contain the future Christmas plum-puddings of England. Woe to little Perez, if his strong-armed father guess the nature of his loitering, if one lid be split, or one box leak out its withered grapes. Now a laggard at a wine-stall canters past us to join the caravan of his companions. Now a dozen boys who have leagued together for mischief or talk, or perhaps a bath in some quiet pool, under a sun-scorched rock, huddle past in a rough trot, trying to make up for lost time. All day, from dark and dawn to sunset and dusk, these strings and trains of pack-asses, with their smoking, tramping, side-saddle drivers, pass us by twos, threes, and dozens at a time, for the vintage has begun on the low, red earth hills, and the raisins are drying fast on the hot terraces of rock round Velez Malaga, at the foot of the Sierra, where the Moors held out so long against the Christians.

By road, you must not imagine a sharp, defined, level, billiard-board Macadam road, such as runs from Kennington to Clapham, or from Leicester Square to Kensington, with tombstone records of departed miles, and banked terrace side-walks. Oh, no. This is quite another thing. Even just under the castle of Malaga, that Blake threatened to bom-

bard if the priest who had raised the mob against his sailors was not surrendered, it was but a lane, ankle-deep in black dust, rutted and stony; and now it is quite a joke as we leave the broad, flickering blue sea, with the wreck and the dancing bare-legged fishermen who, knee-deep in tumbling surf, are dragging in a net, or, gathered under a boat held up with oars, are boiling something in a fiery pot. It is a mere sand track bordered by desert, where nothing grows but sea-holly and a few abnormal weeds. The road looks like deserted building land, for it is uneven, and baked in mounds, running in places to mere sea-beach, loose, gray, and shifting, with here a white cuttle-fish carcase, there a dry star-fish. There are beautiful glimpses, however, of sea, under rock and round points, and I am sorry when we turn abruptly to the left and leave a shore which is wild enough for mermaid dances or syren's carollings. It reminded me of the wild coast Don Juan, in Molière's play, is thrown upon.

Now we begin to pass long avenues hedged by huge cacti twelve feet high or more—their great, semi-tubular, thorny plumes flaunting far above my horse's head—their strange guttered leaves jagged like sharks' jaws, and sometimes the dry stalk of their dead flower stretching up from them as thick as a sapling ground-ash, and at the base of the circumference of a strong man's arm. Miles of these till I know their metallic, worn spiked fronds, and

snapped, jagged tumble of growth by heart—Oriental and unreal as they are; and then come intermingling miles of prickly pear, growing like prickly flat-fish, grown and matted together, and at all strange corners and angles studded with fruit as large as eggs, ripe and unripe, the unripe green and fleshy, the ripe of a dull unhealthy red—the food of Spanish kings and Spanish beggars. They are such things as I should use to decorate the country of an ogre king in a pantomime, for they look gigantic, antediluvian, and maliciously eccentric. For fences they would keep out an army; their stalks harden into knotty stubs, gnarled and tough as forest wood. I amuse myself wantonly as I pace along on Hiccup, piercing the fleshy arms of the aloes with lunges of my riding switch, with slicing off the fruit or severing them, so that they show their seeds like a laughing man's teeth. Or I slash at the quilled leaves till I beat them into a green pash, and can draw out the white moist threads which the Spaniards use for so many purposes of ornament, for they are almost as serviceable as the cotton which I saw growing near Seville.

This amusement I obtained chiefly when I and El Moro drew bridle at some small farm, where a rugged gipsy sort of woman would be driving a donkey that, fastened to a yoke, kept plodding lazily round in a circle turning the noria, the anaoura of the Moors, or large water-wheel, which, covered at intervals with red water-jars, kept dipping them into

the well, and discharging their contents into the garden reservoir. Why did we stop when it was getting so burning and fiery hot?—why, to buy a draught of water from a green pipkin, and to give our horses each a precious halfpennyworth of water out of the roadside tank. How we turned up our elbows, and how the horses sucked, and panted, and drained! Even the mill-wheel donkey made the event of our halt a pretext for stopping, and was only aroused by a shout and a clattering ignoble wallop that sent him on, twitching his ears and swinging his rope of a tail deprecatingly. At every hut we pass there are calabashes tied up for the passing traveller who wishes to buy water, and generally a rude stall with a dirty-red decanter of wine and some greasy tumblers to attract the muleteers. But we want to get to Velez Malaga before noon, and push on. Sometimes, too, there are opaque-looking grapes and the shelly, earthy-looking pomegranates, or a melon with a green slashed sample sliced out of its circumference.

Hotter! hotter! What will it come to? Shall we not be shrivelled or turned to statuettes? More donkeys trumpeting to each other, and winding down from the distant rock angles, by the red crumbly earth-hill, green plots of vines, where the vintage is beginning, and where the white-walled hacienda, fenced in with orange-trees, stands like a beacon to this winding road, where we only begin to ascend by

a viaduct that winter torrents roll under, and under the Carthaginian martello-tower on the cliff, now left for the hawk and lizard to settle their differences in.

"Did Hannibal build that?" I asked El Moro.

"It's only an old castle," replies my unantiquarian guide, loading with brown dust tobacco the white paper of his fourth cigarette.

Now the scene of my Spanish panorama rather changes, for I leave the undulating red hills and their procession of stubby vines and trend away to the left through a low lane shaded (a blessing on that word!) by hedges, or rather groves, of immense green rushes, with stalks like wild cane, and willowy leaves always on the stir. They are twice my height, and I slash at them as if I was charging a phalanx of Mussulmans, for Don Quixote is in my mind, and I am at last in the old region of the water-loving Moor.

Now the rich farms of the Sultan Boabdil are before me, and I amble past broad hedgeless fields, where the sweet green melons—globes of liquid honey to the taste—lie weltering about, surrounded by a dry entanglement and cordage of withered branch and tendril. There are fields of sugar-cane, too, green and pleasant to the eye, already high as ripe wheat, though not to be bled and cut till spring; low-lying batateras, or sweet potatoes, with fantastic-shaped jagged leaves; tracts of indigo, and enclosures of white tasselling maize. There is pepper, too,

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and there are orange tomatoes and orchards of pomegranates; and everywhere through this Eden rippling canals of running water—the sweetest music to the ear in a climate all but tropical. Here, too, are hedges of my old friend the prickly pear, rough as lions' tongues or flattened crushed hedgehogs, and everywhere among the dusty evergreen trees and blossoms I hear the droning hum of the cicala, now like a fairy spinning-wheel, now metallically sharp and gustily restless and monotonous. It singularly affects the excited mind does the chink and singing clatter of these invisible insects hid among the aloes. You are alone; there are no birds singing; it must be to you they call. What do they say? What do they want? They are in the trees, too, and ten feet high among the red-green fruit of that prickly pear, and up behind the green scoops of the aloes, and all singing in whirring unison and at once, with a metallic pulse as if the heat had become vocal. The sound is as of a factory at work, deafening and shrill.

We have left the mules laden with planks and raisin-boxes, the crumbling Carthaginian seaside towers, water-mills creaking, straining, and splashing, wine-stalls with resting muleteers, cliffs, desert commons, and sloping vineyards. We leave oxen—patient, waddling beasts—dragging, at a snail's pace, high matted carts, and savage-looking fishermen staggering fifteen miles to market with yoked panniers

of glittering fish upon their sturdy, sunburnt necks. More dry, dusty beds of winter streams, more herdsmen gnawing melons, more fishermen mending nets under tents, and we reach, amid a pressing fury of growing heat, the place of our noon-day siesta—thanking God for breakfast after our eight hours' ride.

I will not relate how the toadying, smiling landlord of the posada at Velez Malaga kept, all the time I ate squares of the red saddle he called pork, fanning me to keep the flies off my august face, or how he divested me of the rich thick coating of white road dust except where the water of streams we had splashed in and forded had turned it to wet mud. They had no butter, for the Spaniards get all they use salt, stale, and smelling, from Holland; no cheese, because the Spaniards do not care for cheese; so, at last, weary, vexed, and burnt up with the glare of the last few hours' ride, I threw myself down on the landlord's bed over the stables, and went to sleep till the horses had fed and rested.

I did not stop long at the birthplace of General Blake, the great enemy of Wellington, and chiefly renowned as having lost more than a hundred battles! I had seen the Atalaya towers, and the spires and Moorish fortress of the old Roman station. I had tasted the famous sugar-cane honey; I had seen the sugar-canes from which sprang all those of South America, and had heard the legend of Sebastian

Pelao, who sacrificed himself to save Ferdinand the Catholic from a Moor's javelin. I had now to mount the barren Tejada mountains, on whose tops nothing but the wild rosemary and a few aromatic shrubs grow. I have to reach to-night Alhama, the Roman and Moorish city of hot springs, the unclean mountain Cheltenham of Spain, only accessible by mule-tracks.

El Moro gives the word below my window to boot and saddle. I, torpid and drowsy, stagger up and mount on the bad eminence of Hiccup, who now seems more than usually stiff and lazy. We trot slowly, in the face of a raging sun you dare not look at, past the trim Alameda, with its avenue of young dry trees, and its benches on which a few loafers are sleeping, and get out into lanes and gardens, opening to the level dusty plains, lined with water-courses that are formed by the gray dust and stony detritus from the Tejada mountains. There is no road now at all, only a padded-out track in the dust, such as leads you across the black lava dust round Vesuvius.

We ford shallow purling streams, and work round a river in which muleteer boys are bathing with intense gusto. We pass dusty, bloodless olive-trees of great age, that remind me of Palestine, and cross brooks which are fringed by purple oleanders. Now a stony, dusty climb, as round the base of Snowdon, till we make a certain windmill, at the mouth of a

gorge that has been two hours tantalizingly in sight. More dusty rock and barren mule-track, bedropped here and there with gnawed melon-rinds, and we come suddenly, to my intense delight, upon a green valley of orange-trees, hidden in a scooped-out bowl of the mountains, beautiful as a glimpse of the enchanted gardens that lured Thalaba into sudden rapture in the Desert, and bright as the Happy Valley of "Rasselas." How glossy green and burnished the round serrated leaves are; how close-grained and seamed the light-brown trunks; why, in spring, when the white blossom is out, this valley must have the perfume of Paradise, and the scent, as of the wings of encamping angels, floated hither on eastward clouds. To guard it as with drawn swords wreathed with green, stand the dark cypresses, those patient, watchful trees of one fixed idea of stuck-upedness and gloomy hypochondria. Undertakers' tree, I hate ye! I look for the omega-shaped palm, but it's not there; but there is the fan-leaved tamarisk and the Egyptian lupin in the gardens, and children picking the tunas, with clothes-peg hooks fastened to long spear-handles. As for the orange-trees, their fruit is still in light green glossy globes, and is not yet turned to the redder gold of perfect ripeness. Shall I know ye again in Garcia's window in Cheapside? I trow not.

It is all very well to talk of Paradise, but I know, on the mountains, where you catch your first purple

glimpse of the Sierra Nevada; I shall pass rows of murder-crosses, with "Pray for the soul of Sancho Panza," killed here, such a date, and so on. So I will push on, while it may be called to-day, up these white burnt mountains to the Byron's Ay de mi Alhama, or, it may be, Ay de mi for the friend of Hodgins, of the Mounted Bombardiers.

Now, hotter and hotter, with my red and green umbrella up, when I don't use it to whack Hiccup; and El Moro, whom the heat makes sullen and silent, with his handkerchief streaming down the back of his neck, we enter a mountain village, up green and water-splashed sloping lanes. Everywhere a hot scented steam of drying raisins rises in the fiery golden air. From every whitewashed house you hear the smith's hammer pound and tinkle, as he coopers-up Malaga raisin casks. Under every open shed, thatched with dry reeds, you see busy carpenters planing and shaping those little raisin boxes that adorn the Christmas windows of London grocers. Down the rocks come more mules, laden with boxes. We have scarcely room to pass them, especially when a water-course boils and bubbles on the right-hand side of the rocky pathway. The dark-eyed village girls are beating clothes clean in the rivulet below us. Under the sheds are old women, sorting dry yellow maize husks, to stuff mattresses with, and others are plaiting the grass cordage that is used in tying the boxes on the mules and donkeys.

The heat has become glaring and intolerable as we toil round and round the upward path, sometimes in solid grooves of rock, only just wide enough for the horses' hoofs; sometimes over broad, slippery table slabs of rock, over which Hiccup, who drives me to the use of violent interjections in English—perhaps the reason he takes no notice of them—drawls, struggles, and strains with difficulty. I feel like Hagar in the desert, struck through and through with sun-arrows, my eyes dazzled, my limbs red-hot, my lungs on fire. We stop nearly every ten minutes or less, at the wayside chofas (huts), where a jar, tied to the post, indicates water is sold, and before the landlady can shuffle out, seize it, and tip over a good pint. It rolls down my throat nectar, liquid manna, sweeter than the wine which I keep for medicinal fiery sips at certain turns of the road where the scenery demands some vinous backing up. We hand the crone the usual cuatros, and ride on, cheerful, talkative, and rejoicing. It is no use; five minutes more of clamorous circus feats over that perpendicular, hot, white rock, and again the roof of my mouth is like a dried potsherd, my saliva is gone, I pant, and pine, and moan for water. So we go on, circling, climbing, and scrambling over loose stones, through hot dust that we seem to breathe. In vain I loosen shirt and waistcoat; the sunlight comes down like raining fire, and drains me of stamina, pluck, vigour, hope, energy, ardour, and almost life.

At last, after miles of these burning mountains, by degrees, as we leave man and man's home, and rise higher and higher, through defiles where the mailed Moors must have poured down often to succour Alhama, or threaten the Velez valleys, the sun seems to get a little soothed and softened. We get up to higher tracts, cloven with water-courses, as by earthquake fissures. There are distant mountains, brown and stony; nothing grows but broom, the "star" dry disks of half-withered thistles and sweet-smelling bright evergreen rosemary, some of which I pick for remembrance. The ghosts of the night bear down in purple cloudy phalanx, through breaks of the snow mountains, just as I come to the murder-crosses, where, long ago, old vendettas were wrought out, and good blood shed by bad men.

I get in that state of fire and romance, that I should not be startled by meeting the Cid, of a giant size, and lapped in gold armour, mounted on his black charger with the white star on his forehead, riding down to see if his portmanteau has come from Gib by the P. and O. steamer. I half expect to see old Boabdil wiping his eyes with a Crystal Palace Exhibition handkerchief, and wending to exile as a waiter at the Dromedary Tavern, in the Moors' Street, at Algiers. But I do really meet nothing but some more mules, the drivers of which pronounce the usual grave salutation, "Vaya con Dios."

It was late when we got to Alhama, which we approached by a road that traversed dreadful ravines, and which compelled me to dismount from Hiccup, and lead that fitful beast, now more stammering and intermittent in pace than ever. In the darkness, the yawning gulfs at the side of the road looked abysses of purgatory, and we both gave a hearty and involuntary exclamation of satisfaction when the twinkling lights of Alhama broke upon us from what seemed the bottom of a well, down which we seemed doomed to ever wind and wind, jaded and forlorn, from dusk to midnight. More stony and tumbly the road became, more rutted, and unsafe, and moss-trooperish; but at last we wound round all the screw, and crawled into Alhama, sore not of foot, but wearied to the bone.

I soon secured a room away from the sort of stable courtyard and blacksmith's kitchen, which was crowded with muleteers, ordered a charcoal fire to be irritated and put on its mettle, and, seeing the horses first both put to their niggard but wholesome meal of chopped straw, which is the horse-diet of Spain, stumbled up the brick stairs to my bedroom—a whitewashed enclosure, with no bed, and no furniture but a chair and a rickety table. It was a caravansery room, and that is all.

A grinning Maritornes soon put this to rights, rattled in a trestled bed, shook it into place, put on clean sheets and a motley counterpane; brought a

great pitcher of water, which I kept for five minutes at my mouth, and only dropped at last from exhaustion; she fetched clean towels, shaking nearly everything that she could shake in my face, and calling out, "Muy limpio"—my own words, tolled out so often, and at so many Spanish inns. Then eggs, bacon, a bottle of wine, thick and strong, some fruit, and some fat chocolate, that ran over the cup in a brown paste; that was my supper. Didn't I sleep afterwards, that's all! till daybreak, when we started again for the mountains.

Of my next day's ride I will not say much. Suffice it to say that after more thirsty walkings, more scramblings over barren mountains, more windings round whity-brown cliffs, and more fordings of half-drained streams, we got to El Ultimo Sospiro (the last sigh), or the mountain where Boabdil, the exiled king, is said to have turned back to take his last look at his native city, which he had not defended like a man, yet wept for like a woman.

Granada, Granada lay before us, as we rode down into the green and still fruitful Vega, that spread far and wide below.

CHAPTER V.

A DAY IN THE ALHAMBRA.

THE first thing a man generally does when he gets into a new room, is to look out at window.

And this is what I, following the traveller's instinct, did when I got into my bedroom at the Fonda Minerva, Acerra del Darro Carrera del Xenil, Granada. I had just come in from a long ride across broad sandy suburbs, and through villages where old knights' arms were carved over every door; and now, having refreshed myself by slices of juicy melon, and the sweet opiate of a cheroot, I ran to the window and got on the balcony, which looked out on the river and the street.

"Whereabouts is the Alhambra, then?" said I to the waiter, who was obsequiously shifting a chair, looking out into the intense sunlight, that made me leave go of the balcony frame as if it had been red-hot.

"Up there, señor," said the waiter, pointing to a hill rising above the line of range which my eyes had been skimming.

I looked, and saw a sharp-edged, square, red tower, rising out of trees on the hill before me. My first impression is of a cork model, of a pastille-box, of something almost toy-like; but I remember the old Moorish inscription in the Alhambra bath-room: "What is most to be wondered at, is the felicity which awaits men in this palace of delight." So I cram down all depreciatory doubts, and start off to scale the steep Calle de los Gomeles, that leads to the gate de las Granadas, by which you enter the palace jurisdiction. That small trim summer-house-looking tower, not bastioned and bulwarked like our own Gothic towers of strength, that deride the thunder and bare their breasts for the lightning to splinter on, raises fears in me, and I hasten to see if the Alhambra is a palace of the Arabian Nights, or only a mere tawdry ruin, bedaubed with faded colour, like a bruised moth's wing.

I pass a fountain-square; and, guided by where the citadel must be, begin to wind and climb. I observe that, as Seville is duller and more monastic than Cadiz, so Granada is more lifeless than Seville, which is its hated rival. There are no jaunty majos; the women are not flitting about, but slouch along, instead of stepping like deer; the houses are poorer, the streets narrower; the exquisite grated doors of iron filagree have thickened to jealous and suspicious-looking wood; the courtyards are smaller, and less palpably Roman; the balconies seem less



A FOUNTAIN SQUARE, GRANADA.

places of gathering and of gossip; there are few marble pillars and bananas; no diligences jingle and jumble at the doors. I ask the way to the Alhambra of a tinker who is soldering a hopeless kettle under a wall in the open air. He says: "It is only a *casa* de ratones" (a rat-hole).

A Spaniard, not yet forgetting the old quarrel, cannot understand why you want to see an old Moorish ruin. The smart new casino in the Bull Plaza street is something: but that old kennel—bah!

What contempt the man who has been a day in a place has for the man who has just arrived! Just as I left the fonda I spied an Englishman arrive, and instantly set out to scale the Tarpeian rock, for fear of being obliged to share in his crude view of the Moorish city of Boabdil. The last traveller I had met had a genius for contradiction, and a passion for discovering in every place a resemblance to Constantinople; so I thought I would be more cautious this time, and be off with my superior wisdom of one day.

I expected to see a few olives, or some dusty-leaved vegetables, as I passed a lolling group of thirsty soldiers, seated at the Horseshoe gateway, and entered the Alhambra precincts. I rubbed my eyes. Was I already in Fairyland? Why, it was an English park —a great sloping hill growth of spindly, wispy elms: real English elms, tall and broomy,—run to seed, as it were, from over-heat, perpetual irrigation, and

want of thinning. Delicious green roofs they formed against those arrowy sunbeams; but no more in keeping with the old Moorish palace than Bolton Abbey woods would be with the Pyramids. No wonder they form the special pride of favoured Granada, that sweats up the hill to get cool under their shade, and listen to the nightingales, who, like the souls of dead Moorish women, sing all the noonday long, in this English bramble-chained wood. But, why English? Why, simply because this wood was the present of the Iron Duke, who had the estate of Soto de Roma, with its four thousand once pheasant-haunted acres, given him reluctantly by the grateful Ferdinand the Seventh, and who sent out these spindly elms, now spoiled by ill culture, from England. There is a breezy stir amongst them as I pass. I think they know I am an Englishman, and want to ask me about their kindred; but I don't know the tree language; I am also in a feverish hurry to see the house the Moors built and coloured for Time to make a slow meal of.

But still, as I set my breast against the green shaded walk, and toil for the great wooden cross Cardinal Mendoza set up, and the ugly fountain beyond that he did not, I turn to look down delighted through the hundred yards or two of cool shaded walk, at the great yellow glare of the street beyond, seen through the Horseshoe entrance-gate. It is the Valley of the Shadow of Death and Bunyan's Bright

City conjoined into one. I go on and on, turning to the left, by a half-ruined tower, at the foot of which is a fonda, where some red-faced men from Gib are frothing up recurrent glasses of beer, and, discussing Irving's Legends of Giant Moors, pass round a garden-walk at the foot of the wall, and reach the grand entrance, the Gate of Judgment, the Gate of the Law, the Baboosharai, as the Moors called it, where, like Job or Samuel, the Sultan, or Cadi, sat and judged, grave in his green turban. Ever since 1378 that inscription of Yusuf, the founder, has been there over the inner doorway: "May Allah make this gate a protecting bulwark, and write down its erection among the imperishable actions of the just." The sons of Islam wrote over the inner brick doorway the name which still remains there of the warlike and just Sultan Aboolwalid, Abn Maser, the Commander of the Moslems of Granada; and, as the inscription in the long-barred Cufic letters tells us, the door was closed for the first time in May, the month of the birth of the Prophet, when all the almond-trees in the Alhambra and gardens must have been in a tender pink bloom, when the white scented flower was on the orange, and the blood-red blossoms on the pomegranate. This was one of the four entrances to the old fortress. The others were: the Tower of the Seven Stories, through which Boabdil the Unfortunate went out, and which, as being unlucky, was afterwards walled up; the Tower of the Catholic

Kings; and the Armoury Tower; all built of tenacious concrete, the doorway-jambs of white marble, close-grained and crystalline, and the omega-arches of the bygone race moulded of sharp red brick. I pass through the winding passages between the two arches, intended to make them stronger for defence, in case of a rush of spearmen, who by these angles would be broken into detail, and chopped up in detachments, and observe the blind beggars, who chatter perpetually of their infirmity, ready for any who pass by, underneath the tawdry painting of a Virgin, covered with a sort of dairy-grating of wire, such as you put over meat in hot weather. Over that curious horseshoe arch is a quaint open hand, carved, which has a talismanic and Arabian Night effect. Some say it typifies the hand of God, the symbol of power and providence; other mental spiders, who rejoice in spinning out fine silken threads of fancy, suppose it to be a type of the five commandments of Islam,—to fast, give alms, to smite the Infidel, make pilgrimages to Mecca, and perform purifications. But the keenest of all steps in, and says it is only the old Roman talisman against the evil eye, such as we see in coral on Neapolitan lockets: the evil eye is specially dreaded by the Spaniards even now, their cathedral-towers being generally left unfinished, to ward off such malign influences.

Over the inner arch is a sculptured key, which critics, who always agree, decide was a badge of

honour, and an emblem of the Prophet's power, like St. Peter, to open hell's or heaven's gates. Our keen man, however, again stepping in, pushes by the crossed swords of controversy, and says the key was an old Cufic emblem, intimating Allah's power to open the hearts of true believers. It was a badge on the Almohades' banners, and is seen in many Moorish castles. There was an old legend before the Conquest that the Christians would never take this red castle till the outer hand gripped the inner key: a story something like the old prophecy of evil to London when the dragon on Bow steeple met with the grasshopper of the Exchange; a meeting which, after the fire at Gresham's building, really took place, but without producing any special earthquake, or even raising the price of turtle-soup.

I pass through the strong gates, now unwarded from the Infidel; pass the silent guard-room, where an old woman knits under the supposed miraculous picture of the Virgin, painted by Saint Luke; file up an enclosed lane, a sort of valley between fortress walls; and enter a space, under which are the old Moorish cisterns, which the donkeys that toil up for the water from the low town of Granada have special reasons to curse. I cast a hasty look at the burnt, brown, giant stones that were heaped up by Charles the Fifth, to form his never-finished palace that the earthquake (felt again only the other day in Seville) frightened him out of; and I run up the torre de

vela, to see the magical bell that peasant girls use still for their love incantations, and read, hastily turning to get at the fairy palace within, the inscription relating, with all the exultant freshness of recent conquest, how Cardinal Mendoza, the night of the surrender, waved upon this tower, in sight of the subject Vega and purple Parapanda, the flag of Leon and Castile, crying, con altas voces (with a loud voice), "Granada, Granada is taken!" I see the distant Sierra of Alhama, the gorge of Loja, the spot where Columbus turned back recalled by the messenger of tardily repenting Isabella, the old Roman Illiberis, the rocky defile of Moclin, the chains of Jaen, the mountains where the mules brought the snow for the Sultan's sherbet from, and the gate where the brave Moorish Decius, seeing the city was lost, sallied, as Irving tells us, to die in the camp of the Spaniard.

I pass through the obscure door that leads to the Court of the Fish-pond, repeating the verse of the Arab poet: "This is a palace of transparent crystal; those who look at it imagine it to be the ocean. My pillars were brought from Eden, my garden is the garden of Paradise; of hewn jewels are my walls, and my ceilings are dyed with the hues of the wings of angels. I was paved with petrified flowers, and those who see me laugh and sing. The columns are blocks of pearl by night; by day perpetual sunshine turns the fountain to trickling gold."

I left behind me a burning town; I passed through English plantations to a convicts' prison, a deserted palace, an unguarded fortress. Now I pass through a rude door, and up some steps, and am in the palace of Haroun; Granada changes to Damascus. The Moorish arches, with their slender palm-tree shafts, rise around me; the walls are no longer stone ramparts, but pierced trellises, that turn sunshine and moonshine into patterns, and seem like so much Venetian filagree. Surely they are needlework turned to stone, or some great Sultan has built them with panels cut from caskets of Indian ivory, though the piecing be not seen. The myrtles grow green and glossy round the great marble tank chest, one hundred and fifty feet long, which flows with mellow water, in which burnished metal fish, some apparently red-hot, others of pliant silver, steer, flirt, skim, and splash. Never stop to think that the dry, whity-brown, tubular-tiled, sloping roofs ought to be flat, and are not now Moorish. Do not stop to imagine the pierced marble balustrade that once walled in this bathing-place of the dark-skinned people; nor picture glowing Bathshebas—Rubens' group of floating and laughing Sultanas, with female black slaves watching their innocent Diana gambols from corner stations under the shady portico. Air and water are the perpetual treasures of this place, and I tasted them both gratefully as I strode under the pointed arches, away from the burning lashes of the

sun that drove me under cover. Now, beyond where the fountain bubbles like a singing slave, whose language I can only decipher as perpetual lamentation for the exiled Moor, I pass through the oblong Hall of Blessing, which is still radiant with colours as the edge of fading evening cloud, and where the cornices of inscriptions sing to the praise of some long dead sultan, who conquered twenty fortresses, whose excellence ran clear through his great deeds, like "the transparent silk thread that joins a necklace of pearls." I learn from the rivers of poems that fret the wall, that this unknown dead warrior made the very stars quiver in heaven, yet guarded the tender branch of the young fig-tree from harm. I learn that the stars shook when he stamped, yet that the boughs of the willow bent before him in adoration.

Now I enter—intoxicated with the fragile yet imperishable beauty of the palace—the Hall of the Ambassador, the golden saloon, with a dome which bursts like a flower-bell sixty feet high up in the Tower of Comares. An ingenious friend of mine, clever at theorising, which is a sort of mental tight-rope dancing, thinks the Moorish dome was suggested by the scooped-out half of a melon: a theory which I cap by deriving the scalloped edge of the engrailed arches from the jagged edge of the aloe's leaf. In sober truth, I do not think much of any fanciful architectural theories, believing that sober, drudging necessity suggested architectural shapes,

and that ornament was quite a superadded subsequent luxury. We first get our shirt, and then we put on the ruffles. We first roof ourselves in, and then go on refining about the shape of the windows.

The most beautiful thing about these Moorish domes is, not their grand poise and balance, or the spontaneity of their spring, but the airiness of them. They seem mere resting clouds swelling round you and canopying you with colour; you have no sense of their weight or means of permanency. The stalactite ornament, too, as it is called, seems fashioned in emulous rivalry of prisoned, golden-celled honeycomb, in which honey still rests—honey, dyed by the juices of the flowers from which it has been drawn.

I go into the Sala of the Two Sisters, so called from two gigantic sister slabs of Macel marble, which pave the centre of the floor. I crick my neck with looking up, and let my eye soar upwards and flutter like a bird in and out those flower-cup cells, which seem the first creative types of some fresh world of fairy blossoming. A severe scientific American from "Bawstun," next me, will insist on telling me that the thing is very simple: it is a beauty put together by mere receipt. Those coloured cells, so shapeless yet so harmonious, are mere prisms, united by their contiguous lateral surfaces, consisting of seven different forms, proceeding from three primary figures on plane, the right-angled triangle, the rec-

tangle, and the isosceles triangle. These component parts are capable of millions of combinations, just like the three primitive colours, or the seven notes of the musical scale! A very simple receipt, yet no one can cook anything like it. And grand, too, to think of the old artist, sitting down with his palette of changes on his thumb, with three primary triangles, and three primary colours, producing in this one conical, helmeted roof alone, with his mere reeds and plaster, an almost eternal sheltering of beauty, and some five thousand prismatic changes. "The carpentry of these roofs is tarnation 'cutely done," says my friend Spry, the great American traveller, "and was derived by the Moors from the Phœnicians and Egyptians." (This is the vermilion roof mentioned by Jeremiah.) "But you should see the town-hall at Bawstun!"

The Moors had a keen sensual sense of the necessities of climate. They were always thinking of the Arab tent. They wanted air and lightness. These marble pillars are Mohammed's tent-spears grown to stone; this network lace veil that filagrees every wall with cobwebs of harmonious colour, the old tent tapestries, the Cordovan stamped leather hangings,—the Indian shawls that canopied the wandering and victorious horseman's tent. They did not want the Titan-dome of the Pantheon, or the great metal bell that hollows over Saint Peter's; they wanted mere pendant flowers woven together into roof and gos-

samer-pierced panels, that hardly arrest the air. Everything must float and sway; they would not bar out the chirp of the dripping silver water in the garden-court without.

The pillars they thinned and shaved till they were no longer round blocks of rock—supports originally of dark, cool, Nubian cave-temples—but mere banded flower-stalks, or young palm-trees, slender as spear-shafts. The spandrils are not corbelled beams, faced with figure-head monsters, but perforated props, as to some princess's cabinet. They have no Samson pillars that bear up the Atlas-road, and that, if falling, would bring down roof-tree and bower in one common destruction; but then there is nothing to support, only ivory-patterned walls, and a honeycombed dome that floats in the hot air. As for the ornamentation, away with your Arabic Euclids and triangles. It was thus devised:—

The great architect, Ibn Aser, had roofed out the burning blue sky and the lightning heat with a plain bell-dome, after the manner of the Romans; but his soul was not satisfied, and he sat cross-legged on his prayer-carpet, between the palm-pillars, looking up, and praying to Allah for more light of divine wisdom. At that moment came dancing in, with shell-shaped castanets, calabash guitars, Moorish cymbals, and the nose-flutes of Barbary, a band of Christian and negro slaves, waiting for their fair mistress, Nourmahal, the light of the world. Wan-

ton in their joy, they flung about their arms, which, mingling together black and white, looked like night, just when it is changing into day; and they began to pelt each other with handfuls of snow, which lay there in huge matted baskets, brought that morning on mules from the bosom-clefts of the Sierra Nevada; and the snow on the black faces fell as swan's-down, but on the fairer faces it was as ice-dew on the early roses; then, tired of this amusement, they began to toss hundreds of snow-balls aloft up at the domed roof, seeing which could make most snow adhere to the hollow globe; and when one obtained the victory, she laughed with a laugh that was as a peal of silver bells. Then came the loud clapping of a black eunuch's hands, the signal that Nourmahal needed their services with perfumes and syrups in the bath-room, and they all fled like a herd of fawns when a wolf breaks from the oleander bushes. Then the architect, looking up smilingly at the clotted snow, hanging in bosses and tufts, cells and pendants, fell on his knees, and thanked Allah for so graciously answering his prayer. This roof (you will find the story in the "Arabian Nights," or somewhere else) was fashioned from the melting roof of a snow-drift —it suggests delicious coolness—and the soft fretted hollows of half-thawed snow, flung up to the roof by playful hands, and modelled ere it fell.

But what shall we say about the colour as it exists? Is it emeraldine, like humming-birds' wings, or plaited

flowers? No; we must tell the sober truth, though we die for it. To call a rose a tulip is no pleasure to our mind. The colour is dim and faded, buried under white flaky icicles of accursed whitewash, or blurred and besmirched as a dead butterfly's plumes. Here and there are revived bright scraps of azure, gold, and vermilion; but generally it is dull of outline, and dim as a washed-out sign-post. It is not a bit like the hard, opaque, staring red and blue peppermint colour you see in Mr. Owen Jones's at the Crystal Palace—and never was, I am thinking. Blue predominates; red and yellow knuckle under, in geometric traceries of starred and crystalline harmonies. The walls are like pages of illuminated missals, framed by cornices of poem and prayer; where the Spaniards coarsely imitate the Moorish work, the debased greens and purples obtrude, and show how inferior in decorative art civilization is to instinct. The dados, or low wainscotings, are of square glazed tiles, which form a sort of glittering breast-high coat of mail to the lower third of the palace walls. Here the colours are the same as those of the old Majolica china,—the Raphael ware, which originated in the East, and may be seen now in any London curiosity-shop window. The dyes are the same—orange-purple, dull sap-green, and a reddish-brown. Sometimes these Azulejo tiles, with their low-toned enamel colours, are formed into pillars, or pave the floors in squares of fleurs-de-lis, or heraldic

emblems, the willow-pattern blue predominating. The low, deep, shadow tone of these tile wainscots seem to me to quite disprove Mr. Owen Jones's staring vermilions and opaque blues. In a country where the sun is solid fire, the Arabs wanted shade; and in these dados colour is seen in the shade, such as you find in their Turkey carpets, deep, soft, and subdued. They did not want the raw red and blue stripes you see on child's peppermint — not they. Mr. Jones will have it, too, that all the hundred and twenty-eight pillars of white marble, eleven feet high, that in sisterly groups, as of hewn ice, support the pavilions and porticos of the Court of Lions, were originally of a flaming gilt. Only imagine the Moors cowering under windowless roofs and domes, which were perpetual caves of scented shadow, looking out on a fountained garden; barred in with burning pillar rods of burnished brass. Why, it would have scorched their eyes out. There is, in fact, no trace of gold on the pillars,—no shining streak or dull spot, or single dot of glitter. And, to prove our case still more, the ornaments of their strange basket-work blocked-out capitals, are of white ornaments on a blue ground: the blue, the blue of the salvia flower; the white leafy tracery, the white surface of the original marble. Sometimes it is red with blue leaves, or blue on white with gilt bands and perpetual pious ejaculations of "Blessing! There is no conqueror but God!" Mr. Jones may angrily say that white,

too, is blinding; but, then, marble exposed to this air soon grows of a soft mellow cream colour. These phylactery sentences everywhere on the walls are traces of a custom that the Chinese still retain. When one or two lines perpetually stare at you from a wall, the effect would become wearisome, or else the sentences would soon altogether cease to catch the eye or rouse the mind. Just as old Montaigne, talking of habit, says, in his quaint Gascon way, that after a day or two he ceases to smell his perfumed pounced leather doublet, therefore, what use was it? A dreadful argument upon the wearisomeness of repetitions. But these geometric Cufic letters crying aloud from the walls of God's greatness, goodness, and power, of the builder's magnificence, of the Sultan's splendour, are so countless, harmonious, and interweaving, producing such a shot-silk cross-light of poetry and praise, and sink, when the mind is torpid or indifferent to them, so naturally and gracefully into mere surface ornament, that they are never out of place, but always an unsatiating charm of pleasure. The long broken-shaped African letters wed with the Arabic scrolled writing, which is a later and more current hand: the one, like the Roman, originated in stone inscriptions before men wrote much anywhere but on great men's tombs; the other, in parchment scrolls of physicians and Aristotle commentators; and they both, though dumb to us, have a strange enchanted look to the Ferringhee stranger.

There has been a great deal of dull disputation about the Alhambra, now ended, though it never should have begun. For instance, on each side of the ante-room of the Hall of the Ambassadors are two high cupboard-looking recesses, or niches, like the piscinas of our country churches. Blundering wise men would have it that this was where the attendants put their slippers before entering to an audience, till an Arabic scholar coolly pointed to an angular inscription round the aperture, which said, "If any one approach me, complaining of thirst, he will receive cool and limpid water, sweet and without mixture." Why, any Spaniard ought to have known that here was where the Alearaza, or porous earthen bottle, common to all, was placed, just as it is now in Andalucian gentlemen's halls, or on the bench at inns. In Spain, water is a necessity of life. In England, we wash with it, and do not drink it: in Spain, they drink it, but do not wash with it.

It is just facing these apertures that Boabdil's throne was placed. Those living inscriptions still speak of it, like old babbling servants in some deserted country-house, now used as a show-place. Hear them how they cry perpetually, "This dome is our father, and we, the recesses, his daughters. We are members of the same body, but the throne is the heart from whence our soul derives energy and life. Yusuf, my master, has decorated me (the

throne) with robes of glory, and I am as the sun; these recesses being as signs of the zodiac, in the heaven of this dome." Once give a wall a voice, and you have the Arabian Nights, Æsop, and La Fontaine by the next stages.

Now we go down beneath this throne-hall, to a network of dungeon-like passages, by which sultans often escaped in treasonable revolts, when the angry scimitars were glittering in the fountain-courts, or when the Abencerrages were tossing their threatening spears in the buzzing city below.

We go into a prison-sort of Germanized room, with whispering holes at each end; which Philip the Second, the sullen bigot, built to amuse the wretched child (Don Carlos) he afterwards murdered, much to the subsequent profit of Lord John Russell, and an army of other bad poets, who can reform a nation, but not their own verses. We go into a vaulted wine-cellar sort of room, where some rude statuary, too bad to be pitied, has been immured by the prudish monks, who have always a keen eye for indecency, and find it out as soon as any one. We enter the state-prison where so many heart-groans have been heaved, and look out of the window, from whence Ayesha let down Boabdil, who afterwards proved not worth saving.

It puzzles me always in a ruin to realize the actual life of the old inmates. Where did they keep their cold meat? sounds tolling in my ears.

Where did they put their coals? did they bruise their own oats? or did they double up their perambulators? are not questions more often and pertinaciously suggested to me. There seem no nooks or corners, no lumber-rooms, no billiard-rooms, no pantries, no wine-cellars. True, there are their bath-rooms and alcoves, their little bins or windowless sleeping-rooms, as in Pompeian houses; their doorless porticoes and recesses, which gold tissue tapestries, and Mamelukes with drawn sabres, may have made private; but where are their kitchens? where are their store-rooms and their shoe-rooms? An echo answers, "Don't you wish you may get it?" It is true that opposite the Hall of the Abencerrages, where they show you a damp-red stain, which is devoutly believed to be their blood, there is the Hall of the Two Sisters, where the Moorish kings resided. Out of this there are square cells, for sleeping on cushions, just as if sleep was not a regular meal, but only a sort of snapping lunch, to be taken in hasty snatches in lulls of business, as Napoleon took it. And if you pass under the engrailed arches—like so many lace collars copied large in gilded stucco—you see curiously bolted Oriental doors, and, looking up, a high-latticed corridor, where the ladies of the harem could look down at audiences or public dinners, seeing, but unseen. When you go up, you fancy a sort of rose perfume, as from Damascus silk, still lingers about the place,

but you look round, and see it is only Bensaken, the famous guide, lighting his cigarette. Again, if you turn to the right from the Hall of Ambassadors and pass down a heavy Charles the Fifth gallery, you come to what Ford calls "a Bathsebah mirador," which is what the grumbling Spaniards, who hate Moorish antiquities, call "the Queen's dressing-room." Chilly Flemish Charles blocked up the Moorish colonnade, which was draughty in winter, and daubed this boudoir wall with sprawling Italian frescoes of the battle of Lepanto, which his brave bastard won. Thousands of Smiths and Joneses have scratched their names since on these green frescoes, and will obtain, doubtless, the degrading immortality they courted. Certainly there is in the corner a marble slab drilled with holes like a sink, through which, foolish guides say, perfumes were smoked up while the radiant sultana put on her rose silks and pearls above.

We also get a glimpse of life as, groping about passages with broken walls, that show dark hollows of subterranean aqueducts, we come to the Moorish bath-rooms, stupidly called the dungeons of Ayesha. There is, as at Cairo, an entrance undressing saloon, and an inner vapour and shampooing bath, where the separate seats of the sultan and sultana are duly pointed out with the peculiar lying exactitude of guides. The vapour-bath has a blue dome roof, punched into star-shaped holes, just as you would

pierce a pumpkin's rind. Shirking the ponderous-panelled blue, red, and gilt covered ceilings of Charles the Fifth's apartments which look on the orange gardens of the Lindarajah, some beautiful legendary Moorish princess, I come to the old mosque, afterwards a chapel purged and consecrated by Ferdinand and Isabella, the conquerors of Granada. The door was once plated with bronze, and, like all the rest of the palace, stripped and spoiled by succeeding generations of guardian thieves, who allowed no one else but themselves to steal. You still see above the door the exquisite laced niche where the Koran used to be placed by the green-turbaned moollahs. The inscriptions, which were dumb to the conquerors, who else would have smitten them as blasphemers, still protest for the old faith, and cry aloud from barge, board, and netted rafter, "Be not one of the negligent." "There is no conqueror but God." "God is our refuge in every time of trouble." Were not these better men than those who replaced them?

I look through the mosque-grated window into the luxuriant garden run wild with a frolic luxury and intoxication of growth. I drag through a stray bunch of transparent gold grapes that sway at the bars around which its tendrils cling and twine like a creature loving its prison. As I pick the fruit the yellow and black-banded wasps follow each grape to the very door of my teeth. I hear the swallows speaking to me inarticulately from the burnt-up tiles,

but I do not know what to answer, not having been able to procure a dictionary of the high-flown swallow language, which seems to contain no word of anything but love. Now I am often angry. What a dilemma I should be in then. No, I will not learn the swallow language; so leave me alone, birds. "Je nontong paw," "Ik can furtseyn nic." GET ALONG.

Last of all, at least in this day's visit, Bensaken and my vivacious American friend, who still persists that "it is nothing to what we have in Bawstun," drag me to the Hall of Justice, with its three court-rooms or apses, now blazoned with the royal Spanish badges of the yoke and the bundle of arrows. These three saloons are at the east end of the Court of the Abencerrages, which faces the Lion Court, and, indeed, forms one side of it, with its forest of marble pillars and pavement channels for running water. Here, on the ceiling, are the curious old frescoes, painted on vellum, in a rude sort of Byzantine manner, by some Christian renegade it is supposed, for the Moors think it impious to draw the human figure, and only tolerated it here in some decaying age of restless luxury. In these the figured Moors, as in some old romance, unhorse Christians, and deliver ladies from insult.

Then, to learn our ground-plan, we go all round the Alhambra Hill, which guide-books compare in shape to a grand piano, the point of the triangle

towards Granada, observing the square where the great mosque once stood, that the blundering French blew up, and the aqueduct that they all but destroyed.

Then, as the blue of dusk gets deeper, and the guide looks uneasily at his keys, I descend through the long avenue walk of the Alhambra, listening to the clatter of castanets from the fonda dancing-booths, and descend to my hotel, through winding, narrow defiles of streets paved with black and white pebbles arranged in scrolls and flowery branches. A giant Moor comes to me in that night's sleep, and says:

"When you return to the city that is called, by the unbelievers, London, go to him whom men call Jones—Owen Jones—and say to him, 'My friend, thou hast made a blunder.' He'll know what I mean. I haven't got a card. By-bye."

Just then the Sultan Sun, flashing his great golden scimitar in my eyes, awoke me.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TOURNAMENT AT THE ALHAMBRA.

It is difficult now, as I look out of my window on the broad London street where, in the pleasant April sunshine, the cabs stand calmly casting their sharp-drawn shadows on the striped stones, so that, to my fancy, each cab seems to have a funeral coach drawn up beside it—it is difficult, I say, taking breath in a new sentence, for me to throw myself back into the sea of past time with a quick somersault of four months, and realize that burning African day that I tossed myself off my worn-out horse at the door of the Granada hotel.

I had started that morning before light, and had been riding for hours over the scorched dry mountains down to the city of the Alhambra. All the day before, too, from four in the morning to twelve at night, I had been on horseback, driving on like a mounted wandering Jew up burning hills, between green banks of vines, whose leaves were transparent golden green, as the emerald panes of an old church window in the sun, scuffling through lanes walled in

with sweeping reeds rising higher than my head, ambling through villages where the finger-posts were great wooden crosses, over mountains where the passes and gorges were decked with a radiant purple, and where our horses' hoofs beat sweetness from the dry thyme we crushed beneath us as we rode (Spanker wanted, but I stopped him, to get off and collect some of it for our next pea-soup at Gib).

Ah! now somehow or other the sunshine that makes the brown-holland blinds in my room transparent, and stripes them with a curious cross pattern of the window-frames, brings all the weary delight of that dreadful ride into my mind. How thoroughly Spanish it was! I, with my leather bag of wine tied at my saddle-tree, where it splashed, churned, and gurgled, making sweet speaking music to me as I rode; then the switch of a pear-tree, the green Moorish wells of stirrups, and the quaint Rosinante of a horse, branded on the left flank—although, Heaven knows, he was not one of what Spanker calls "the Runaway family;" and as for stealing him, no horse-stealer in the world would risk so much, only to anticipate the knacker by a week. Then my great crimson and green umbrella, expanded like a full-blown Van Toll tulip above my scalding head. Then my guide, the little boy-man with the trim legs, little jacket, turbaned hat, and red bundle tied to his saddle—his luggage for his four days' ride.

Shall I ever forget that religious procession with lights and banners, that screamed hymns all night through Alhama, where the Moors were once routed, and were the Romans had their baths, and which, an hour or two past midnight, seemed to break into a sort of grasshopper chirrup of dry bony castanets and fandangoes, without beginning or end?

What a change that cool dewy night, when I sat at the window, looking out at the new sky spangled with new stars, larger and of a better water than those that shine over Soho and Mile End, to that burning noon of so many hours ago, that it seems now a week of hours, when I rode like a hunted mad dog, with my dry sore throat pining for water, between those huge hedges of cacti where the cicalas kept up their mocking and unceasing chorus; when all the world seemed asleep, and we had to wake up the inn we rode into by a lusty pounding on the stable door.

Then, what came next? Oh, that tracing round and round the bridle-tracks worn in the black sand by the dried-up torrents where the oleanders, crimson and purple, grew, and over the pass by the windmill, that seemed to fly from us, to the mountain villages where the raisins were drying and scenting the air, up to the higher plateaus where the murder-crosses began to dot the road, and where, at last, we saw the star-lamps that were as the harbour lights to the befogged mariner.

It is all these scenes—hot dusty lanes where we ride through clouds as of smoke, small bowling-greens of English turf high up among the mountains, where we burst out into gallops in the very gladness of our hearts, and soon after in a quiet tame amble enter the long avenues that lead to the royal city—these are the scenes my mind turns over; just as if it were tumbling over a collection of proof-prints just wet from the press. Now I am led up a dark staircase into a dark room, and throw myself worn out on the hard anatomy of a sofa, as the agile waiter flings open the shutters of the darkened windows, and asks me what I will take. I, a washed-up survivor from a tossing sea of troublous hours, ask feebly, in a thready, tired voice, what hour it is, believing by the hot years that seem to have droned by since I first got on the saddle where I have been all day roasting, that it is about three, for my watch has stopped. The waiter tells me that it is only eleven, at which I am lost in wonder. I order rolls, butter, a melon, and a bottle of gaseous lemonade, which I know will be tepid as broth and flat as ditch-water; but I am too burnt up and debilitated to be able to reject or reason upon the first suggestion of my thirsty appetite. It comes. I draw myself up to the perpendicular, and fall-to. The melon melts at my touch—the lemonade I unwire with caution; instead of going off like a pistol, it oozes out imbecilely, and I drop half the contents on my knee.

Gradually, after a short balmy nap, I feel new blood filling my heart, just now dry and empty. The fire passes away. I feel vigorous, refreshed, and hearty. I inquire for Spanker, who had left me for Granada three days ago. I find he is at the Alhambra, and the night before had got up a gipsy dance within the walls of that kingly ruin. All the chiefs had been there from their caves outside the palace, and the Boleros and Eastern dances had been fast and furious; the waiter, smiling, told me I should find Señor Spanker up in the Hall of the Ambassadors with Bensaken, the famous guide. Ben—Saken—it sounded very nautical and English, but Ben by descent was a Moor.

A knock at the door. Enter gipsy boy quite out of breath, who puts in my hand a cocked-hat note from Spanker, inviting me to come to the madhouse in the Street of the Five Wounds. If I missed him there, I was to meet him at the Alhambra.

Away I went to the Street of the Five Wounds—to the madhouse. "Elizabeth Martin!" as Spanker would have said. The fugitive fellow had gone half an hour ago. Left a message, that the English Señor should not miss seeing the place. Should find him at the Alhambra. I went in. Oh, what a humbling sight to a man who stands much on his head, a madhouse is! Here were men, who, from some single warp of the blood, some wrench of a valve, some

few months' too long repetition of one idea, were become beast-men, unreasoning creatures, whom the world thought it was compelled to enslave and imprison. I met idiot slaves in those long, bare, white-washed corridors, who reminded me of the creatures in Dante's "Inferno." All wore that unchanging wan look of suffering and of a pain that never slept. All seemed to be suffering from some horrid and unutterable crime, and to bear about a flame at their heart and brain. They all had that dreadful insane stare of wild, unchanging, concentrated watchfulness that shows no love nor humanity lingers in the heart. Halfway up-stairs I saw a haggard creature, with hungry-looking dry hair, huddled in a heap on the stone landing, and clinging to an open grating that looked into the courtyard—clinging with one bare foot thrust through the bars like a new-caught bird longing and pining for liberty and air. He never turned to look at us; but his foot paddled about in the free air, and liberty was his only thought. His name, the keeper told us carelessly, was José Prado, and he believed himself to be Boabdil the Sultan of Granada, unjustly detained in prison by the cruel Spaniards.

Then mounting higher, we were taken into a small room to see Lopez de Mallara, a mad painter. He was at his easel when we entered, and took no notice of us, except by a smile, which lit his sad, worn, and tormented face. The walls are covered with sketches

of Saint Luke, the painter's Saint, whom, the keeper said, Mallara believed always present, praising and criticising his work. It was vanity and success drove Mallara mad. He is always trying to paint a landscape of chaos, and the ghost of a flea; every day, when he finishes, he rubs out his sketch of these two difficult subjects. He was now working with gravity at a picture of Moses striking the Rock—a subject Murillo painted, and one purely national and Spanish; for thirst is an institution of this petrified country. The canvas was certainly cut curiously into two exact parts by a straight palm-tree; but that is eccentricity, and the tree did not look much out of place. No more were the open-mouthed Israelites, running about in their striped hoods and Arab-looking robes, clamouring about the miracle, which was tearing down the back of the picture like a young Niagara: no more were the women falling on their knees, either to clasp their dying little ones in their arms, or to fall on their faces and thank God for their deliverance. But suddenly I started involuntarily, as I came upon a spot in the picture which marked the palpable insanity of the painter, whose brush, as I look more curiously, works on so pleased and busily. Yes, there was one leprous spot of insanity, terrible to discover, as the boil on the armpits, that was the sign of the great plague. There, quietly huddled in a corner, like an afterthought, were two naked Israelitish boys, one of them chatter-

ing with his teeth and shaking his fist angrily at the other, who was tossing over him a cupful of the miraculous water. Well, up to this even, the picture was reasonably rational; but here madness broke out. The splashed liquid was not water, but diamond dust, quicksilver, or some boiling or fermenting silvery metal, which rushed about the boy in shiny metallic globules.

"Pepé Lopez," said the keeper, in an under voice, "murdered his father three years ago in Virgin Mary Street, just by the Alhambra Gate. He believes he will be sent by Saint Luke, when he is one hundred and one years old, to paint landscapes in the moon, as scenes for the Seville Opera House."

Then I passed through the women's ward, where certain bull-necked, coarse-looking women (many of them murderesses) were pacing up and down unceasingly, with that feverish tiger-prowl peculiar to insanity. One was mad from vanity, another from love, another from religion. Only one woman stopped to look at us, and to give a sort of crazy laugh at the novelty of the interruption.

As I went out through the last ward, I stopped for a moment to notice a cluster of old men huddled round a stove, warming and circling their thin, shrunk hands. One of them, suddenly fixing his eyes with insane and horrible fixity on me, muttered a wish that he could pass his knife through me, whom he had been so long waiting for. "That,"

said the keeper, "is an old guerilla, who committed horrible crimes and cruelties against the French. Nothing will induce him to mention any particulars of his past life. Sometimes he will crawl out to the grating to beg tobacco of visitors, otherwise he never speaks."

Only yesterday snow was lying like whitewash on the roofs, and turning the hackney-coaches into the semblance of large wedding-cakes; painting even the lampposts white, and crusting white the window glass. It warms me this cold day, when the feather snow is waltzing and circling in the brown London air, to think of the fiery walk I had up the hill to the Alhambra, where I was to meet Spanker. How glad I was to pass through the Horseshoe gateway, where the gilt crescents once passed out to scare the Christians, and get under the green roof of those tall wisps of elms, that dreamily reminded me of England and English parks, and green solitudes, where the only sound is the soft brooding cooing of the mother wood-dove. I strolled up, enjoying the exemption from the heat, and the warmth, without the scorch, of the external sun; not one of whose fiery shafts could get at me, but fell, blunted and hopeless, from the broad emerald shield that arched over my head.

There are two days of a married life, a wicked old writer says, that are perfectly happy—the first day and the last day. The happiest hours of my

life have been the lulls after a corn has been extracted or a tooth drawn. I rejoice on the mere strength of a moment's impunity from my bath of golden fire, I feel a sort of enormous flat-iron lifted off my heart, my blood runs warmer and quicker, as if the tide had begun to turn, and my whole body grown taller, stronger, and more elastic. If a harlequin window had been near, ten to one but I had gone through it. I climbed up the sloping avenue, past the sentinels, singing a verse of an old Spanish love-song:

"White feather of the fountain
The June wind blows away,
Tell me, has the sweet Dolores
Pass'd this place to-day?
I see her clue of rose-leaves scatter'd
Leading past that tree:
Fair fountain with the silver stalk,
Then farewell to thee."

As I sang this, I was passing the curious little tea-garden summer-house tent, which has been erected by one of the numerous inns that in the summer time desecrate the interior of the palace grounds. It was a great square marquee, the roof all striped pink and white, the interior looking very much like one of those dinner booths, musical with the pop of Champagne corks, which you see on the Epsom Downs on a Derby day. There is no one in it now but one or two sleeping waiters, who blink at me as I pass, and a stray guide, who is seeking

whom he may devour, and longs, like a starved locust in the desert, for some "green thing" to stay his stomach. I pass the great raw wooden cross that Cardinal Mendoza set up here when the city was taken from the Moors, and begin thinking, in spite of Syrian roses and those tufted palms with snake-skin trunks, what a desert the unprotected palace must have stood in before our Duke—the Duke of Dukes—sent over this elm-wood—true British. I must have——

But what is that wild war-whoop—half tallyho, half scalp-cry—that sounds to me something like the Tyrolese "Tur-li-et-ty!" that war-cry of our modern civilization, not unheard in the——

I looked up and saw a kindly red face without its ordinary accompaniment—the flaming scarlet uniform—hanging over the balconied paling of one of the Alhambra inns, with a tumbler of bitter beer frothed to snow in his hand. It was Spanker, hearty and boisterous as ever, beckoning me up to his "coign of vantage." Behind him were several other faces that I did not know.

The inn, which looked very much like an inn at Twickenham or Fulham, had sneaked in under the wing of one of the old ruined towers of the Alhambra's outer fortifications, which gave it an air of respectability, and amused you by the contrast. A great hole in the gray wall above our heads, the landlord pointed out as the place where, during some Spanish

troubles, a gun had been run out. It was indeed the very spot of the appearance of the great Moorish giant in one of Washington Irving's delightful Spanish legends of the old Moorish palace. It was, it struck me directly (and I do not take any peculiar credit for the acumen), rather a curious way (this of Spanker's) of examining the beauties of the fairy house of pleasure—but I said nothing. Every traveller has his own sort of spectacles, I thought—yellow or rose. Some use a magnifying glass: just now a microscope is the rage. Spanker looks at everything through a bitter-beer glass; but not bitterly.

"Monsieur Spanker a beaucoup d'esprit, BEAUCOUP!" said a queer, thin old fellow with a white hat, who sat at the same round table with us, and addressing himself to me.

"Shut up, Bensaken!" said Spanker, thinking it necessary to stop the too palpable flattery of his seedy adherent in the white hat. "Capital beer, isn't it?"

"Bensaken!" said I, with a start, as the grave man smiled grimly. "What, the famous guide, without whom Fortywinks said it was impossible to see Granada!"

"The very identical," said Spanker; "ain't you, Ben?"

Bensaken had evidently become prime minister, guide, counsellor, and friend to Spanker, and was now laying out a little sort of ground-plan of half-

dollars on the table for his patron to understand clearly what he had to pay. All time saved from guiding us, Bensaken, the old gentleman of Moorish extraction, evidently thought gained.

Bensaken's manner was highly characteristic. He was something between the old travelled colonel whom you meet at the clubs, and a faithful old English gamekeeper. His dress was too seedy for the colonel; his hard, grave bearing too dignified for the gamekeeper. His face was the old soldier's; but his legs were the legs of common life. This moment he leant forward, astute and sagacious as a Talleyrand, to propose some plan of baffling the greed of Spanish landlords; the next he ran off, with all the humble servility of the odd man at an hotel, to do our meanest desires—hire us horses, or take places for us at the bull-ring. "Stunning old fellow Ben," Spanker used to say, when we found him sitting at the hotel door, waiting our return for some expedition, his commission well done, and all we needed anticipated. He called us at preternatural hours, before the hotel-waiters were up, checked and pruned our bills, advised us on purchases, bought us cold chickens and melons for our coach journeys, filled our wine-flasks, dragged us to diligence offices an hour too soon, never forgot the salt in a pic-nic parcel, asked a mere trifle for his daily services, and when we shook hands with him at parting almost shed tears. "The faithful feudal old buffer," as

Spanker exclaimed, watching him till his old white hat faded out of sight. I would have trusted faithful old Ben with untold gold. Compared with guides in general—half wolf, half parrot; their fathers alligators and their mothers sharks—Ben was a perfect Cid, a gentleman, from the crown of his head to the tips of his toes. He had only *one* tongue, had Ben; and his heart was pure and transparent as if it had been one flawless crystal. There was no whining guide-book cant about Ben. May no nettles grow upon his grave, but roses of the pure blood! Ben was a man of knightly honour, and as like Don Quixote in face, and stature, and bearing, as though he had been his twin brother. When I first saw him disentangling with chivalrous eagerness and feudal subjection (that proud virtue of days when men were not ashamed of rendering superiors obedience) the knotty wire of the pale-ale bottle, with the red pyramid stamped on it, I turned quite scarlet, as though you had struck me in the face, and thought at last I had found the Don. But at that moment Spanker cried out, after rummaging his pockets:

"I say, Ben, run and get my betting-book; I left it on the table in the room where we had our grub—quick!"

Ben strided off too much like a guide to be the Don, so that bubble went to pieces.

"I am afraid of Silly Jane," said Spanker, "and I shall hedge. Wouldn't you? I asked Ben; but he

didn't like to give an opinion. Besides—would you believe it?—these fellows here don't seem to care about the Gib races. Now, Ben, what have we seen to-day?"

Ben being appealed to as the incarnation of Spanker's memory, crossed his legs without a smile, and began: "The fish-market——"

"Ah! I remember the smell of it. Strong old place."

"Yes (gravely), strong old place. The Rivergate, called the Eargate, where the mob, at the sixteen hundred and twenty-one festival, tore off the ears of some ladies in trying to get out their earrings; the Gate of the Daggers it used to be called, because here the police stuck up the knives they had taken away from rogues. Then the Gate of the Spoons, and the fruit-market—then the palace on the north side of the Moorish plaza, where lived —do I speak correctly?—the archbishop, whose sermons Gil Blas said smelt of apoplexy——"

"Awful swell book, Gil Blas; many a flogging I got at school translating that. Well, go on, Ben; we saw so much I've forgot half."

"Ah! you English officers always will see so much. Then the Moorish house in the covered street by the Bonita fountain, where they have just found, in a hole in a wall, a key, a Moorish deed, and some coins, that must have been concealed in there when the Moors were expelled from the city

by some one who expected to return again. Then we went to the square where the Moors had their bull-fights and combats of the jerreed."

"Who's he?"

"The jerreed, sare, was the cane javelin used by the Moors."

"Oh, I see! Is that all? Well, and what are we going to do this evening? Mind, no more pictures, and no more churches; for I will not see them, d'ye hear, Ben?"

"This evening, sare, we must go to the disused gold-washings in the Darro, and see where it joins the Xenil; where at twelve, on Saint John's eve, the pretty ladies all go and wash their faces, that they may have good complexions for all the year."

"The little muffs!" says Spanker, laughing. "Oh, the archbishop's palace we've seen; the pomegranate wood is too far off; and bother the Xenil and the Darro, I've had enough of it. Get those bits of the Moorish tiling, Ben, for me, I ordered. What was that verse of the Sequadilla, about the two rivers rushing to meet like lovers, Ben?"

"I know,

'Darro tiene prometido
El casarse con Xenil'"—

"Oh, give it us in English!"

"'Darro has promised to marry Xenil;
"To marry" should follow "to woo."
Her portion will be, so they told it to me,
The New Square and Zacatin too;'—

because the Darro in time of rain blows up the New Square and runs up the Zacatin. Well, there is the burial-place of Ferdinand and Isabella—'Small, small space for so much greatness,' said Charles the Fifth; the church where Saint Nicholas drove out the thieves; the old Moorish palace of Boabdil's brother, now a charcoal warehouse; the Moorish baths, now used by the washerwomen; then there is the Silversmiths' Street"——

"There, Ben, that will do; quite enough if we do half that. Now for a run once more through the Alhambra; and then, Ben, for the tilt-yard in Charles the Fifth's unfinished palace, where they fight the young bulls now, and where Ben will read us that curious account of the tournament in Philip the Second's time that he has dug out and put together out of two or three of their old historians. This Ben is always reading. It seems a shame wasting time, doesn't it, Blank? I'm for moving."

We were all for moving. Ben began to prove to us it would take at least three more weeks to see Granada properly. Again we brushed our way through the tangled boughs of the great republic of fig-trees, pomegranates, and cypresses, bound with chains of vine-boughs, in the palace gardens, under the castle balconies, where Moorish princesses once listened by night, fancying each nightingale in the olive-trees a serenading lover. We smoked our weeds in the queen's bath-room, under the blue dome

starred with white. We got on the old terraces above, and looked down on the city and the ravine that serves the red towers for a moat, that still Death and the Christian at last mocked and spurred over. We moralised in the great Hall of the Ambassadors, where Spanker would take off his boots and put them in the niche where the Moslem nobles once put their scarlet and yellow papooshes. We lay down and sang in the small, dark, windowless bedrooms; in fact, we rehearsed, as far as time would allow, the old Moorish life.

At last, we got to the old tilting-ring of the unfinished palace of Charles the Fifth, and Ben, taking out a greasy copy of the old chronicle he had referred to, began to read the story of the King's Tournament in the April of I quite forget what year.

The account began with a good deal of military millinery. Spanker, eyeglass up, with the usual vacant glittering stare of that optical implement, listens intently. All Spain must have been, for months before, perfectly alive with carts laden with Eastern gold-stuffs, crimson and azure damasks, striped brocades, for the decorations of the knights pavilions, the housings of their horses, and the decorations of their squires and varlets. As for the lists, to judge by the chronicler's sanguine account, they must have been "as gay as the Oxford Street windows when the spring fashions come out," said Spanker. As for the knights, they must have

looked as gorgeous as court-cards set on horseback; for, while the shield of one was stamped with red bezants, another was spangled from top to toe with golden bees; a third wore on his helmet a black dragon with wings outspread; a fourth was liveried in a suit half red, half blue; and next him rode a Gascon gentleman with a gold weathercock on his helmet, to show that he was a knight-errant bent wherever the wind might blow. Terrible was the stormy shock when these brave men met full butt in the centre of the lists. Then the air was darkened with splintering lances, broken banners, and floating feathers; sparks flew, like hives of fire-flies from every helmet; shields were split; blazons were erased with blood. Many that came singing and scornful, went away with bandaged and aching heads.

It was pleasant sitting there in that ruined amphitheatre of chivalry, hearing of the fierce, honest sport of the gentlemen who had not yet invented that great safety-valve for superfluous energy—fox-hunting. Again seemed to pour into the circle a sort of deified Astley's troop of plumed steel men, each led by a lady with a golden chain. Again we heard the horn's blast driving in a great cavalcade of spears, borne firm and evenly, with banners roofing over all. As for Bensaken, I think he would have gone on reading all night the special blazon of each knight, the beauty of each horse, the peculiar excellence of each course of spear-breaking—

Spanker, rising, and taking the Gorgon glass from his eye, to show that the house was going to divide, remarked: "All I can say is, that it was a precious plucky business: but it must have taken a great deal out of 'em. How could a fellow go on parade next morning, I should like to know, after he had been carrying fourteen stun' of armour about for five hours, had his helmet poked off his head twice, and three times been pushed over his crupper? It's all very well, I should like to see a man do it."

"BUT THESE WERE SPANIARDS," said Ben, closing the book.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SPAIN OF CERVANTES AND THE SPAIN OF GIL BLAS.

THERE is a Castilian proverb full of Iberian humility, declaring that when you have said "Spain" you have said everything; that monosyllable, Spain, including all others within its periphery. I can scarcely go so far as this; although I think that, when you have said Spain, you have said also, in understood brackets, nuts, oranges, chesnuts, garlic, pride, bull-fights, and superstition.

To the general mind, Spain is a matter of mountains and orange-trees, castanets, dancing veils, black-lace fans, and those filagreed lace jackets blazoned on plum-boxes which are said to be the work of the Spanish Royal Academicians who contribute all sorts of clever illustrations to promote the sale of plums. Add to this, a scrap of Cervantes, a scene from Gil Blas, some Gipsies by Murillo, a battle or two, a few Moors, Pedro the Cruel, the Black Prince, Columbus, Philip and the Armada, a Bull-fight, a good deal of cigar smoke, and you have the popular English notion of Spanish associations.

The popular mind has always some way of reducing nations to a type. To some all Italy is represented by a brigand in cobalt breeches and crimson cross garters, leaning pensively on his musket under a Salvator Rosa tree that has been split up for firewood by the lightning. To others, the Russian is always in a sledge being chased into Moscow by wolves. As children, we got hold of these types from juvenile books, and cannot get rid of them (if our minds are not elastic) till we drive off the spectres by reading, travel, or an enlarged habit of thought. Every one, in fact, has some unclaimed forest or waste in his head which he has from time to time to clear, plough, and restore to cultivation and daylight. Some of us, unfortunately, never drain our brain-swamps all our lives long, and we pay for it on the drop or on the hulks. Some of us partially cultivate, and then leave the crop to come up as it likes. These are prejudiced men: our mental petrifactions, our Tories, our finality men, our fogies, and our bores.

Now, since that evening that Doctor Johnson in a tremendous voice, and giving a shake of self-conviction to his frizzled and scorched wig, told that intolerable faithful coxcomb, Boswell, that Spain should be visited, Spain has been visited. It has been so Murrayed and Forded and inspected, that there is no reason why reading and thinking Englishmen should not know all they want to know

about Spain, from its highest alp to its deepest river. There is no reason that we should not toss for ever into the dust-hole of oblivion that spectre Spaniard, with ready knife and black brows, who has been so long dancing the fandango in the popular mind; for be sure that men as brave, and wise, and constant, and faithful, and pure-hearted as any in England, may be found on the Asturian hills and on the Castilian plains. All apples came originally from the bitter crab; and, because we are at present the golden pippins of the world, we have no right to crow over the winter russets or the leather jackets of that unfortunate orchard over the blue water.

It is true that Spain had a short reign of it. No empire ever fell to pieces so quickly, or was more splendid a luminary while it shone the very centre of the spheres. In history it is the old story of the hare and tortoise, the flower and the oak-tree. It is the same all through the world—slow to grow, long to last; quick to grow, quick to pass. But then what a sun-burst of mind and body it was! Columbus to find out half the world that had been playing hide and seek with us for thousands of years. Charles the Fifth to reign over half the globe, coming, like a man always rich, on a hid treasure. Cervantes to make the world laugh till the last day dawns. Don John to crush the Turks for ever, the very time that the last Moor was driven from Spain. Don John (with Cervantes, first

of the boarders) to drive back those threatening and terrible Turks that had hung so long like a thunder-cloud ready to burst over Europe, endangering not merely this or that empire (which, whether it were red or blue on the map, mattered not much), but, what was more terrible, even the very life of Christianity itself. Call you this no work done by the short-lived labourer in the great field of nations? Have we not to thank Spain for scotching the snake of Mohammedanism; for discovering the New World; for writing Don Quixote; for giving us, in long wars against the Moor and Frenchman, a grand standard of heroic chivalry, armed religion, and lion-like endurance of fire and steel? And if we do think rather harshly of the Inquisition and of South American cruelties, let us review these doings with kind pity, remembering the stubborn and unforgiving bigotry that ages of struggles with Mohammedanism had produced, hundreds of years after our paganism lay forgotten in its grave under Stonehenge; let us learn from it to be ourselves tolerant in small surplice matters, and to treat with forbearance the Red Indian, the Caffre, and the Australian aborigine. Why Spain maintained her power so short a time none can tell, except He who gave that power and who took it away. Let it check the national pride of the student of history to reflect, that perhaps Spain's time may come again when ours is over. It is as a rich mine that greedy Fortune

has worked hastily for the surface gold, passing on to richer fields; she may again return, and drive down the shafts to new lodes and wider and more lasting veins.

The neglect of Spain is peculiarly disgraceful to Englishmen, because the fortunes of Spain and England have so often been interwoven, and their manners and customs (peculiarly in Shakespeare's time) have very much influenced and coloured our own. Except at Trafalgar, when they dearly paid for it, and during the peddling War of Succession, Spain has generally been our ally—cold, jealous, and distrustful—but still liking us, because we feared and hated what they feared, and therefore hated —the French. Our Crusaders (I am not going to be heavy) helped them to pound the Moors even before Chaucer's time, down to the taking of Granada, when a Scotch knight (ready for the post of danger if he could not get any other post) was the first to ascend the Giralda. Then our Black Prince aided that blackguard (the word is rather below the dignity of the historic style, but then it is antithetical) Pedro the Cruel, who was eventually killed by his own brother, whose throat he had strived so hard to slit. Then the Duke of Lancaster gave his fair daughter Constance to the Prince of the Asturias, son of Juan the First (not Don Juan of the operas). Then we go down step by step of alliance, and interchange of presents, till we come

to the great ante-Mormon King Henry the Eighth; who, after a short trial of single blessedness, had his double, and treble, and quadruple blessedness; who married the unhappy daughter of the great Ferdinand and Isabella, Columbus's friends. And, lastly, we come to *the* Duke, and that waiting game of war beginning with shame and ending with a certain sulphurous glory, in which we fought, not because we cared much for Spain, but because it gave us a pretext for bleeding Napoleon, the great enemy of our trade and of our threatening naval greatness.

And now we know Spain only as a sluggard's garden of a country, where men dance a good deal, stab a good deal, and do a good deal on the guitar; and from which we get our sherry (some of it), our nuts, oranges, melons, and chesnuts. We turn up our noses when we talk of it, and lament, with insolent pity, its undeveloped resources, its bigoted religious queen, its pride, its laziness, and its hopeless poverty.

Oh, if kings at the great day of account shall have to relate with down-cast eyes the history of their buried talents, what scourges and what shame shall not be for those crowned fools who have let this bright land become a prey to the wild goat and to the locust; that drove its vices to herd together in convents, and its virtues to starve on the barren sheep-walks; that let its chivalry decay into knavery,

and its religion into the very dotage of old men's mumbling!

It might make the thoughtful man weep to take now the map of Spain, and look at its choked-up harbours and forsaken sea; its ruined cities; its sluggish people, eager only for vice and folly, slow to work, and swift to stab. To see its plains of Paradise mouldering away into deserts, its pastures cankering into barrenness, its mines unheeded, its ports unused; the very limbs of this great country festering from the trunk; the land that could produce all the treasures of east and west, the wheat of Europe, the rice of Asia, the sugar-cane of South America, the palm-tree of Africa, now lying the dustheap of the nations; the beggared, despised, neglected, sightless country, ready, like a sick sheep, to be torn in pieces by the first eagle that pounces on it from the peak of the Pyrenees.

But I am losing myself in the labyrinths of historical metaphysics. What I want, if I can once get my horses well in hand, is to contrast the Spain of Cervantes' time with the Gil Blas Spain, that is to say, the Spain of Elizabeth's and Shakespeare's time with the Spain of Philip the Fourth. Now, after all, history is not to be sought for amongst historians. It is to be found—at least the history of manners, which is the real history of a nation, what is now called history being the mere dull narrative of the crimes of royal puppets—it is to

be found in pamphlets, chap-books, songs, novels, dramas. There was no real history—no means, that is, of knowing what a nation thought, intended, did—of how it lived, and moved, and died—till novels were written; and of these, one of the earliest and best is Don Quixote, written in Shakespeare's life-time; and one of the next best is Gil Blas, written before we English had any novel worth mentioning, except Robinson Crusoe. We had really no novelist in England till Fielding wrote, and set the world ever since writing. The great misfortune of the Greek dramatists, except Aristophanes, is, that they give us no sense of the times that they lived in. Every man must feel strongest the times he lives in; and though imagination, disliking the severity of facts, may fly easier in the thick and cloudy air of past times, the greatest men always write best of their own times—their own hopes, joys, fears, and sorrows.

People, not knowing the Elizabethan times, do not yet see clearly how thoroughly, except in his great idealisms—as Lear, Macbeth, and Othello (which are of no time)—how entirely Shakespeare deals with the life he lived, in town and country, Stratford and London; its impish pages (Moths); its punctilious courtiers (Sir Armados); its bewildering wit-quibbling Beatrices; its twaddling fogy Shallows; its tavern oracles, Sir John Falstaff; its wild-blood Mercutios; its introspective Falklands (Hamlets); its bullying Pistols;—all these characters, because we

find them more fully portrayed in him than in all the other playwrights, many of whom never attempt or pretend to rise beyond the Mermaid and Bow Steeple, we know to have been photographs of Elizabethan men. Abstractions of human passions, like Milton's Satan and Belial, may arise from reading and thinking, but Shakespeare's men arise only from seeing.

In the same vein of reasoning, I would assure you, from long (I am not ashamed to assert it) study of contemporaneous literature, that the Spain of Don Quixote is the true, unexaggerated Spain of the time of Cervantes. Why should he who knows all his own country invent another? For the human mind rejoices to see in book or picture what it never cared to see in nature—being forced and led to see in the book or picture what it never could see in nature, having the faculty of observation either not at all, or cultivated to a limited degree; being too hasty, or too purblind, or too indifferent.

Cervantes was imprisoned in La Mancha, whose brown bare mountains I have seen from Gibraltar with a start and kindle of delight. It was a lucky and sunny day for the world when, on a certain afternoon, a Spanish gentleman, with chesnut hair and aquiline nose (slightly awry), pale complexion, silver beard, and large mustachios, shut up in the sordid gaol of Argamasilla de Alba, laid his left hand, crippled by an arquebus-shot at the great

battle of Lepanto, on a piece of paper (duly paged), and wrote upon its upper half those memorable words:

DON QUIXOTE DE LA MANCHA.

PART I.—BOOK I.—CHAP. I.

WHICH TREATS OF THE QUALITY AND MANNER OF LIFE OF THE RENOWNED DON QUIXOTE DE LA MANCHA.

And goes on to tells us that his chief worldly possessions were a lance, a target, a lean horse, and a thin greyhound; and how his diet was boiled meat, chitterlings, lentils on Fridays, and a small pigeon on Sundays.

It is to me, at least (not being of the grand ideal school), a most comforting and rejoicing thought that most world-wide books are, after all, but memories. Shakespeare sketches a poor village suicide, or a London tavern character, and they become the types recognised and current of all the world's suicides and tavern wits. He paints a streamlet or a cedar-tree, and they stand for all streamlets and all cedar-trees. So Don Quixote is really a purely local La Manchan book—a parochial and entirely Spanish book—and yet it will be read through all countries and lands as long as men have eyes and printing-presses. Enter the table-land, thirsty country of La Mancha—with its seven thousand square miles, and its two hundred and fifty thousand thickheads—through the mountain gateway of Throw-the-Moors-

Over; explore its treeless, wind-swept wastes, dry and tawny; talk to its perpetual brown cloaks and honest faces peering out of mud-huts, and you will see everywhere Cervantes and Sancho. Here, by a rare streamlet, or under a spongy-barked cork-tree, you find the Pedro and Andrews that the lanthorn-jawed knight spoke to. There are the hemp sandals; here you see the last palm-tree of Andalucia, lingering, like a reluctant Moor, near the place where, for the only time, the intrepid but fleet-footed Spaniards defeated the French, much to their own astonishment. Here the saltpetre dust almost blinds you as you pull out your Don Quixote from a chosen side-pocket. Everywhere in La Mancha is Cervantes; the Don with bandaged head follows you, as you watch the strings of sturdy mules driven by some girl or sturdy grandchild of Sancho, or watch the corn crops, or the saffron, or the stubbly vines, bristling up their grapes with their dwarf boughs and red, scorched, porous leaves. Here you see the true Sancho, fond of his master and of his own stomach; not quick at quarrel, but simple, trusty, and affectionate; honest, enduring, industrious, and temperate; and (not unlike Sancho in this) "attached and confiding" when honourably and kindly treated. Here the Biscayan merchants, with their horse-litters and umbrellas, no longer pass; nor the linked galley-slaves; but you meet the muleteers still, and the flocks of sheep driven by men with

slings, and looming through clouds of dust. At this venta stopped Cardenio, Dorothea, and the Don. Near Torre Nueva he liberated the galley-slaves. To the right is the inn where the generous enthusiast was knighted by the knavish landlord, as we all remember. To the left is the wise village of Valdepeñas, where you hear the wine gurgling in great swollen pigskins, such as the Don slashed open, mistaking for giants. How you think of the shepherd's feast of acorns, and the misadventure and blunders of the Don as you enter the cave of Montesinos, the mouth of a deserted mine, still the haunt of bats and birds, and used as a refuge in rough weather by shepherds and hunters; or at Toboso, the village where the water-jars are made, where Dulcinea, of the red-brown cheeks, lived; or in the pass between the olives, where the mill was that the Don recklessly rode a tilt at, and which felled him with their imperturbable arms. We must always, in reading Don Quixote, to thoroughly enjoy him, associate him with that gloomy king, Philip the Second, with the false eyes, guilty brow, and projecting under-jaw; who married our Mary, murdered his own son, and let loose the Armada at us. We must associate the lean Don, and beautiful Dorothea, and the shrewd barber, and the condescending duchess, so fond of a joke, with the padded doublets of Shakespeare's men — with his Armado, spruce and debonair, and stormy Pistol,

and Nym, "that's the humour of it," and with rings, and ruffs, and fardingales, and swords, and roses in the shoe, with ruffs white, starched, and tubular, with stately speeches, and plumed hats and cloaks. Shakespeare and Cervantes died within ten days of each other, breathed the same air, and looked at the same sun. There may have been men who had seen both; and, although Cervantes does not rail at England, nor Shakespeare at Spain, there are glimpses in both of strong national predilections. When Shakespeare wrote of Othello, and Cervantes of the renegades and Moorish dignitaries, these two gigantic minds were not far apart.

To visit Gil Blas, we must pass on to Vandyke's world—to Charles the First and Louis the Fourteenth—and get to the Asturias, where that ingenious French translator, adapter (I believe that is our modern word for literary thief), and compiler, laid the scene of his delicious but shallow story. Who will know now whether Le Sage stole the manuscript from a Spanish one in his patron's library, or merely pilfered it from Espinel and others? It was not the first or the last thing the French have stolen from Spain. The knavish, unprincipled, sly, nimble-footed, half-French valet, Gil Blas, is no gentleman like the real Spaniard Don Quixote. But what could one expect of a needy and unprincipled French appropriator, living in a bad age, when Spain had sunk and France was

corrupt? Still for a handbook of the times of Philip the Fourth, Gil Blas, the son of the old soldier of Oviedo, in the Asturias, is still the best guide. No one can ever now go to Oviedo and watch the rude Asturians, with their blue caps and yellow jackets, without thinking of the green student of Salamanca, and Gil Perez, the fat Canon of Oviedo: "Three feet and a half high, prodigiously fat, with a head buried between his shoulders—that was my uncle." You would not recal much of the old novel by seeing the single-stick players and sturdy smugglers of the Asturian city. Their curious maize-picking and spinning feasts have no more in common with Gil Blas' epigrammatic friends, than Louis the Fourteenth and Versailles had with the projecting roofs and relic chests of the Asturian city. The fact is, that Gil Blas is a true Louis the Fourteenth book, flavoured with Spanish liquorice. His robbers, doctors, and lawyers are Frenchmen in Spanish dresses. His licentiates and valets and canons are mere Parisian phantoms, speaking a shrewd, not very worthy, man of the world's thoughts. Le Sage had never even been in Spain, so never could have seen the aqueducts and convents of the city of Santillane. And we must remember that while Don Quixote is almost a true and complete guide-book to the country gentleman and shepherd and student-life of the times of Elizabeth and Philip the Second, Gil Blas is but a secondhand introduction to the far less heroic and

interesting Spain of Philip the Fourth—Spain viewed afar off by a French plagiarist, who had spent his life in translating and rifling Spanish books, which then and afterwards, as our Dryden and early comedy-writers learned, were the source of all dramatic intrigue and constructive combination.

Let the student of manners, then, well ransack these books to become acquainted with the contemporaries of Elizabeth and Charles the First: the Dorotheas and Cardenios, the Hidalgos and Sanchos, the Don Raphaels and Gil Blas', that filled the palaces and cottages of the one and the other Spain. Such lean enthusiasts as the Don manned the Armada, and stared at Drake through smoke and fire. Such lean, velvet-footed rogues as Gil Blas handed the Canary to Prince Charles at Madrid, or laughed with the Duke of Buckingham; such Captain Rolandos were to be seen by Puritans in the crowd round the Whitehall scaffold. Such men as the great Duke, of Cervantes, were listening as ambassadors when Hamlet was played for the first time at Nonsuch or at Greenwich. History deals with shadows, smoked on the wall of a vault by dead men's candles. These are living eternal beings of real flesh and blood. Oviedo and Segovia echo for ever with the name of Gil Blas, just as Toboso and other sober La Manchan villages do with that of Cervantes. But as the one was a brave-hearted

Spanish gentleman, who spread his bosom to the Turkish bullets, and thought all lost if honour was lost, and the other was but a clever appropriator of other men's thoughts, the fame of the one will always make an Eden of the La Manchan deserts, the other will not delay for a moment the decay of the Asturian cities.

CHAPTER VIII.

GIB.

THIS is how we first saw Gib, generally known to subs of the Driver and Spanker class familiarly as "The Rock."

The *Firefly* French steamer, bound from Carthagena to Cadiz, bore me towards the heights. It was quite dark, and I was hanging about on the "foksal," talking with a Newcastle lawyer, whom I had picked up at Granada. We were canopied by the huge flying banner of white smoke which blew from the great black cannon-tube of the funnel, and I was trying (abstracting my mind from my friend's touching narrative of the expenses of the late Chancery suit, Niggle *versus* Naggle, in which he acted for the defendant) to imagine myself borne through white clouds upon the wooden horse of the beautiful old Arabian story. It was not difficult, for the soft, white, warm vapour blew straight down on us, and wrapped us in so closely, that we could not, for long minutes together, see the grim, silent man at the wheel far away opposite, the captain on the paddle-

box, the men up aloft reefing, or the fussy old boatswain with the chirping and importunate silver whistle. The talkative Frenchmen smoking on the quarter-deck, the steward peeping up the cabin stairs, were hidden and shown to us only by fits. Every now and then, however, the long trailing white cloud lifted or veered, and we saw again the living blue darkness vaulted over us, and the quivering glory of the southern stars nearer, larger, and thicker set than in our honest, cold English heavens.

Suddenly, Latitat, the lawyer, sprang to the vessel's side (I had heard a sailor mutter something to him, leaning forward over a coil of ropes) and cried, "Gibraltar!" I looked where he looked; there was nothing but the darkness. I beat the dark jet line of the horizon as a dog beats a covert, and at last—dark as with an inner, deeper, and more majestic darkness—I became aware of a huge nightmare shape, like a black whale's back, looming out of a nightmare sea; like a great shapeless sorrow rising through an evil dream. It was the Rock. On the other side, could I but see it, lay Africa; that mysterious region still haunted and unknown; the region of Robinson Crusoe, of the Moors, of Hannibal and Dido; of Saint Augustin and the Donatists; of Carthage; and of that terrible coast where Tommy and Harry—especially Harry—was torn and eaten by lions. I looked up with wonder at the voiceless but keen-eyed stars, and felt a throb of pride burn

through my heart and up into my brain to think I was one of that great nation who had put such a bridle as this fortified and impregnable rock into the mouth of the world. At that instant, as if in personal compliment to myself for my transitory and unusual patriotism, there rose from the long dark mountain that I now could not keep my eyes from, a flaring column of light, and the next instant the deep, bull-dog bellow of the evening gun sounded defiantly across to Africa. It was a challenge to earth and sea; it was a loud-tongued assertion of something more than mere brute power shouted with a spirit's voice to angry Spain chafing in its distant cities; it shook the roofs across the bay in Algeciras; it drowned the rival echo in Ceuta; it was to some, "Beware!" to others, "Take care!" to a few a gunpowder curse; to all the triumphant assertion of a nation in its full stern manhood.

That night I fell asleep in the hot boarded bedroom of the Club House Hotel, Gibraltar, which once, I believe, a great man's house, is now merely a great house for travellers, and rears its yellow-ochry bulk in a sort of small market square just out of Waterport Street, which is the High Street of Gib. I fell asleep after doing battle with the mosquitoes, and thanking Heaven for again getting, after many wanderings, under the red and blue cross, and sank down a sort of dark well-shaft into abysses of balmy forgetfulness. A great boom and bellow—a twiddling

and chirping—awoke me. I ran to the great folding glass window and looked out. Good heavens! the waits? A gigantic military serenade given by the Governor to some hidden Moorish beauty? No! The usual night-tatoo, only go-to-bed-Tom on great drums and a dozen rattling drums and petulant, ear-piercing fifes. There they are just opposite the guard-house, where all day languid young fops in scarlet lounge in the balcony, and read the *Times*. Great drum flinging out his arms as if going to hug the drum or cooper a cask. Little drums subservient but vociferous and mechanically vibrant. Fifes with heads on one side (wry-necked, as the divine Williams calls them) whistlingly military and official. Now they burst out with "The British Grenadiers," with a tow-row-row that must make the sleeping Spaniards turn in their beds and finger the long knives under their pillows. Now they form two deep and storm away down the main street, and I fall asleep ere "God save the Queen" has died out in the distance.

Many a night afterwards, tired from wild-boar seeking in the cork-woods, or after wild Tartar scampers on horseback over the sands to Saint Roque, or after cavalry charges to outpost stations at Catalan Bay, or through the parade to Ragged Staff and Europa Point, after pleasant noisy revelries in Spanker and Driver's mess rooms, or smoking chats in chairs outside the hotel door, I heard that band, yet never did the exhilarating insolence and tumul-



SCARLET JACKETS AT GIBRALTAR.

tuous exuberance of military stirring national ardour rouse me as it did that first night in Gib. I sleep, I thought, beneath the countless guns of England, guarded by her sons, who are my brothers. Gib's governor is my governor, her cause is my cause.

I saw Gib often again. From distant sea-shore mountains, from the broad green washing bay that always frets about the English rule, from Ceuta and the green Morocco coast, always it looked mysterious, unexpected, threatening, impregnable, but never so magical as through that first darkness from the French steamer's side.

There is an exquisite sense of contrast in coming into Gib out of Spain. At once from the land of black fans and red sashes round the waist you pass to English bonnets and black coats—from quails and garlic to roast beef and pudding. Yesterday, you were in a bull-ring, now you see a cricket-ground and a race-course, though it does run round a churchyard. Yesterday, stunted brown-caped soldiers, mean and beaten—to-day, the bold scarlet-jackets, "fellows" big-boned, large-hearted, and of an honest white and red. Yesterday, high grated windows with bars that are but ladder-steps for daring lovers—to-day, grimy glazed windows and the snug dirtiness of Wapping. Yesterday, homeless, comfortless posadas that you walked into uncared for and ungreeted—to-day, the Old King's Arms spreads its gilded gallows-sign across the main street, and, with some faded emblazonry of

the old periwig Eliott age, invites Driver and Spanker to what they call "liquor up." Just a few miles over the bay, in Algeciras, there is guitar tinkling, knife fighting, and everything national and Spanish; here all the grave decorum and level-paved streets of an English market-town, old vulgar names breathing of Chatham or Rotherhithe—such as Bomb-proof Lane and Barrack Alley—greet us on every side.

The men we meet here are not dry, brown-faced, under-sized Andalucians, but plethoric, red-faced majors, bursting with fat, bile, and choler; no dancing-footed and Arab-blooded majos, but puff-faced privates, in white blouses, talking at the corners of streets, about how many "goons" such a battery holds, in the broadest and cheeriest Lancashire. As for the shops, they are real higglers', and chandlers', just as you see about the Minories, and out of their dim snuffy recesses break at intervals real old Englishwomen, free, genuine, motherly old laundresses and charwomen, such as puff at your winter fire in the Temple, or stir the dust about, which they call sweeping, in Gray's Inn.

Not that the Spanish element is at all dead in that cluster of houses under the great batteried rock. No; you still see the pale brown girls with the shining black hair, the dusty muleteer with the embroidered Moorish gaiters and strings of pack-mules —still the quick-eyed Spanish children, munching

melons, or wrestling in the old Roman way, that you see in bas-reliefs, holding each other's wrists.

You still hear in every shop Spanish curses and Spanish greeting. The cigar-shops are Spanish; the names over the doors are all Joses, Pepes, and Pedros, or, if not Spanish, Jewish.

And is there nothing to remind you that you are close to Africa, scarce a gun-shot distance from the pirate-country of the Lower Atlas? Surely. There are some thousand Moors resident in Gib. You meet them everywhere; kingly and erect in their rhubarb-coloured slippers, bare brown legs, and blue and white robes, Othellos every one.

You meet them at sunrise, trooping to some eastward-pointing ramp, where they may kneel towards Mecca, and think of the Prophet, as the saffron fire kindles to burning rose. There they go, past the Jew's synagogue, and the new Moorish-looking church by the King's Bastion, with their haiks and striped camel's-hair looking hoods, black and white lined. It is good to see the quiet gravity and the imperturbable regularity with which they repair to their early matin service, as if religion were something else than a thing to quarrel about. With what pride they pass those sneaking-looking Jews in their sloughing trowsers and blue and white cloaks—their prescribed costume—slinking in their mean black-tufted caps to their daily cheatings—ignoble money-lending old men and sloppy overgrown striplings,

eaten up with the ulcer of selfish greed. "Don't know what we should do without them, though, the old sixty per centers," says Spanker. There they go, all our old friends, Mordecai, Shylock, Gehazi, Judas, and Company, with their hanging sleeves, past the great cigar-shop of Rodriguez, looking up at the old battered Moorish castle, where they hope some day or other to immure those imprudent young Christians, Driver of the Sixth and Spanker of the Eighth. I wonder that the thundering crash of that nightly gun-fire does not frighten them from the place; and perhaps it would, for it can be heard even in the Ronda Mountains, where the smugglers are; but then "thirty per shent" is so very enticing. So let us return to the Moors, for the Jews are not worthy stopping with, and enter this shop of Hadji Ben-Azed, dealer in Barbary curiosities. Ben-Azed is a pilgrim, as the word Hadji implies, and he is quite sultanic as he leans with crossed legs against his counter. He shows us necklaces of little sharp-pointed white shells from the Morocco (Rif) coast, fit for the necks of Abyssinian princesses; bracelets of gold sequins, such as maids of Athens would clasp their white wrists with; yellow slippers, turned down at the heel, barred with bars of blue and stamped with seals of Koran legends; and Arabian leather sacks, of rare, fragrant tobacco, which smells like flowers. He pats, with regal complacency, princely cushions of red morocco, worked with gold

thread, and roundels and lozenges of green velvet. He shows me clumsy pouches, stiff with tarnished lace, knives large as scythes, and huge straw hats, with brims as wide as cart-wheels. When I shrug my shoulders, and do not headlong buy, he warns me in good Spanish and bad English of one Ben-Nerood, a black merchant, who deceives The Anglis, and sells spurious cigars too cheap—"frightful thousand and one too cheap." He assures me in a whisper that the Governor had been that very day in his shop, and said, "By the Prophet! Ben-Azed, you are the —— honestest rogue in all Gibraltar." That very night, just at gun-fire, as I sat busy over oysters at Driver's social board, Spanker looked up, the pepper-box in his hand, and said: "By the bye, Blank, if you want any Moorish curiosities of the scorpions, don't go to Ben-Azed's in Waterport Street. He is the most awful rogue in all Gib." [*Nota. Bene.*—Scorpion is a military term of contempt for Gibraltar tradesmen.] So much, thought I, for regal-looking Othellos, with brown skins, serene eyes, spotless white robes, and rhubarb-coloured slippers.

But what sort of a place is Gib? Well, it is a curious huddle of semi-Spanish houses, flocking together down to as near the water as the strong lines of ugly-looking forts will let them; and because they cannot take up all of what would in another place be quay, there are batteries run up the steep sides of the

rocks as high as they can go, gathering round the tall, raw, square-looking old Arab castle of Tarik, which French and Spanish shot in the great old sulphurous-flaming siege have punched with holes till it is pock-marked all over. And there, with its flimsy-looking red and yellow stucco, pitted terribly, it stands, just as when Eliott stood near it, old Titan, amid the smoke, as Reynolds grandly painted him, with the fortress key clenched grimly in his hand. It is now, Spanker tells me, giving it a look of scorn, a prison for debt; and wonderful stories are told of the strategic skill with which several Gib officers contrive to keep out of it.

Everywhere in Gib the perpetual sense of vigilance and defiance fills your mind: you pass down Big Gun Alley, where a huge bombshell of the old siege is let into the corner of the street wall, and, lo, but a turn from Main Street, with its cigar-shops, stores, chandlers, clock-makers, and Moorish curiosities, you are on the outer road, which is walled in with batteries. The King's Bastion—this is where you stand—faces the Spaniards of Algeciras, grinning at them with its fang teeth: how neat, clean, and firm the stonework is that the convicts still chip and hammer at, with its bomb-proof barracks, its terraces, and slanting roofs for yawning guns! Yonder, a little reef in the sea, is a low line of wall for fresh batteries; and this long jetty with guns is the famous Devil's Tongue that Drinkwater mentions. Line after

line, all along the rock, first the harbour, then the Ragged Staff, then the bleak headland, Europa Point, where the great attack was once made, are everywhere mechanical-looking sentries, red or blue, threatening and defiant to angry, scowling-looking Spaniards, who talk of Gib as a place only lent to us, and one day to be given back with thanks. Everywhere pyramids of black cannon-balls, like so many negroes' heads collected as tribute, and near the Parade, where the rock walls us in on one side, are stacks of gun-carriages, rows on rows of rusty dismounted guns, mischievous and cumbrous; and with these, piles of carriage-wheels in heaps like black cheeses. Everywhere Death's playthings laid up in ordinary. The civilian in Gib seems a mere tolerated accident, and the young military "blood" delights to tell you that, in case of revolt or war, the Government, to whom nearly all the houses and shops belong, would sweep them away at one swoop, and plant fresh batteries upon their sites. But with all this parade of war, I have not yet mentioned the great rock galleries that honeycomb the rock, particularly on the north side, facing the Neutral Ground, which looks towards Saint Roque. Look up at the great hull of gray rock, scarped and unscalable, with the dark square spots in irregular lines around the middle of the crag. Those are the galleries. That end one, with eyelet holes, facing east and west, is Saint George's Hall. They have

vomited fire and death before now, and are always watching the Spanish lines. On this side is the Water Gate, with its herd of lateen-shaped boats, with their yards sloping back like greyhounds' ears; its guards and gates. Outside is a broad, sandy track, called Campo, where the white tents of a regiment under canvas now gleam in a sun almost African in violence.

This heat is not always so extreme. It is the levanter, or east wind, the dreaded scirocco of the rock now blowing; the tyrant of Gib, as the west wind is the liberator; the noxious fire-blast that spoils old generals' tempers and produces extra parades; that tosses all the great ships to and fro between Cabrita and Europa Point, and strews the shore with broken nut-shells of stranded barks. This is the dry, hot wind that makes the mosquitoes more shrill of song and more poisonous; that drives old General Martinet to break Spanker, and Spanker to call out Driver, merely because he set his (Driver's) Skye terrier on his (Spanker's) pet Barbary ape which is chained to a pillar on the wall outside the bomb-proof officers' rooms in the King's Bastion. This is the wind that brings flocks of scarlet-coated subs to the golden grapes at the King's Arms to thirstily drain sangaree, shandy-gaff, claret cup, and endless foaming yellow tubes of Bass's bitter. This is the wind that blights and shrivels, that gives you a sense of unhealthy strained breathing and of checked per-

spiration, that stirs your bile and inflames your liver. It brings on court-martials, cashierings, rows, insubordination, quarrels at mess, and is liked only by the apes that steal the figs in the high rock gardens.

I am just fresh from Algeciras, that sleepy Spanish town across the blue bay from whence Gibraltar looks at night to be a huge couchant sphynx, wearing a brilliant necklace of lamps; or like a huge ark, not yet finished, those lights being the twinkle of the thousand shipwrights' candles. I am fresh from the inn of Ximenes, just facing the landing-place, where I sit all day and watch the ferry boats start and come in, or the cows swimming off to be embarked in the Xebec, for the Spanish garrison at Ceuta, on the Morocco coast. My door has been beset with sleeping sailors, custom-house officers, and stray soldiers, who ignore England, and look at the great floating man-of-war with contempt or hatred. I came across in a one-sailed passage boat, with a crew of old women, who cross to smuggle English handkerchiefs and stockings, and get their living that way. It is only five miles across from this faded town, that some of Edward the Third's chivalry helped Alonzo to win from the Moors; but we take I don't know how many hours doing it; crescenting the bay, tacking, luffing, diving in with the speed and keenness of an arrow, missing the harbour and then tacking out again, to again miss our mark. At last we are in, under the low mischievous lines of

harbour forts, where concealed cannon snarl and make faces at you; and under the great pile of limestone and marble which soars high and broad fourteen hundred feet above the crowd of jostling red, blue, and yellow boats, that push for the water-gate, just by the Fish Market.

This is the port of Gib with the three miles of forts —forts high and low, out of sight, and so near the water that you can fling a biscuit from our boat into their gun-holes. This is Gib—the Phœnician Alube, the Greek Calpe, which those astute classical rascals likened to a bucket. It is in Hebrew, Ford says, "the caved mountain," and it outfaces the African Ape Hill, the opposite Pillar of Hercules. This is the hill of Tarik, the Berber chief, who helped to conquer Spain for the Moors, and who, if we remember right, in a grand paroxysm of ambition, rode up to his horse's neck into the waves, lamenting that there was no further land to conquer.

This rock has been more scorched with gunpowder and fire than any other citadelled height in the world. The Moors, all through the Roman times, claimed it as the legacy of their Carthaginian ancestors. Finally under Tarik, they won it; and the Crescent, that never widened to the full moon of universal conquest (glory be to God), blew from the hill of the Apes, the Phœnician toll-bar, beyond which the Tyrians were unwilling, in their proud commercial greed, to let strangers pass. The Moors lost it in

1400, and regained it thirty years afterwards, when the Spanish governor had spent all its armament money in buying sherry estates. A hundred years after a Guzman won it back, and it remained Spanish. Charles the Fifth fortified it against the dreadful Barbarossa. The sagacious Rooke swooped down on it during the war of Succession, finding it garrisoned by only eighty men, who all ran away except the curate of Santa Maria, who remained to steal the sacrament plate. George the First would have given up the rock at Utrecht, but he did not. The great subsequent siege need not be mentioned; suffice it to say that, in 1783, after four years' perpetual fire, Eliott, standing on the King's Bastion, saw the French and Spanish fleets below, burnt, wounded, scorched, splintered, and riddled, skulk off to Cadiz and Marseilles, while from the rock, black with their gunpowder, splintered and notched, broke a thunder clap of English cheers. "Nought can make us rue if England to herself prove bold and true."

Now, out on Campo, outside the race-course and the bare-looking military burial-ground, or round the other side of the Rock, where narrow bridle-roads, elbowed by rocks on one side, and a raging sea on the other, lead to outpost stations and small fishing villages, are not the places to judge of the picturesque contrasts and motley population of Gibraltar. No, to see its four thousand Moors, fifteen thousand Spaniards, hybrid tradesmen, pimps,

Jews, rogues, and higglers, let alone its five thousand soldiers, its stiff generals, stuck-up doctors, and starched red-faced majors, you must go to Commercial Square, where the Exchange is, and General Don's bust, the club, library, and open-air auctions. Here you will see the yellow-slippered, purple-robed, brown-legged Moors, looking complacently at the long row of hams, or the piles of empty beer bottles that the ivory hammer is knocking down for sale, or standing proudly and stoically watching the gold-laced band, or the groups of red-sashed captains chattering at some guard-room door. Here, proof to all Gibraltar fevers, are the real scorpion women, of a pale, clear, brown complexion, in their red cloaks and hoods, edged with black velvet — such a peculiar dress, but we are in the region of odd costumes—and not a day's journey from the Tarifa women, who still wear the veritable Oriental yashmuk. Next those soldiers, with breeches half of leather, and who, from the tartlets of gold-lace on their breasts, their straddling gait and obtrusive switches, I take to be horse artillerymen, are a group of shirking effeminate Jews, in loose blue cloth dressing-gowns, white linen drawers, straggling sash, and white buttoned caps; they are talking with the well-known negro date-merchant, who lives near the Four Corners, where the Moorish captains wait for passengers or consignments. Then going up to some quiet tavern, "Ale and spirits

sold here," under the sign of the "Good Woman," in Horse Barrack Lane, stroll a white-bloused party of Crimean men; and mixed up with the crowd that pushes roughly through, backwards and forwards, are Spanish ladies, bare-headed, with fans held up to keep the sun off; English nursery-maids and refractory "Master Alfreds," who will pull the stray dogs by the tail, regardless of consequences; white-plumed and mounted generals, returning perpetual salutes; yellow-gartered muleteers, with donkeys laden with strings of water-jars—four in each rack; staring-looking travellers, looking at maps of Gib; subs in mufti, cavalierly gay; and subs mounted on spiteful well-blooded hacks, tearing off for a mad gallop to Saint Roque or the cork-woods. Step out of this past the Governor's house, once a convent, just to get a quick look at the slopes of gunners' cottages and officers' quarters, slanting down from the middle heights of the rock, and you get at once to a parade; flanked by answering batteries, where silent red sentries, under suspended mats, wait grumblingly for the relieve guard. Fifteen hundred miles from England, yet such a sense of England's power! We are growing, we are strong for our age. We shall be, I think, stronger still. Here is power incarnate; the English lion has, indeed, seldom inhabited a nobler den.

This is Gib by daylight; but at gun-fire there is a wondrous change. You are seated in an officer's

quarters perhaps, watching the ape's tricks at his door, or discussing the military trophies over his mantel-piece. Suddenly a yellow glare flashes across your eyes. You look up to see the lightning. At that instant a tremendous shattering bellow shakes the roof, makes the window quiver, and the canary in the cage at the door leap up and take its head from under its wing, and flutter. It is the EVENING GUN—signal for all stray Spaniards to toss off their last nip of brandy, and hurry to their smuggling boats, with their packages of bad cigars and devil's-dust calicoes. If you go out now just beyond the terraced roof of the King's Bastion, where some Moors are praying, you will see the key sergeant and his assistant going round, locking up the three miles of gates and palisaded wickets. Look across at the Ronda Mountains, and you will behold a great red glare where the shepherds are burning the dry grass on the mountains. Now, if you are on board a tub of a steamer that has not yet rounded Europa Point, tremble, for you will be kept all night on board, as no vessel enters the harbour of Gib after gun-fire. Remember, Mr. Bagman Smirk, though squeamish with a long voyage, there is no use in tearing thy hair or wringing thy hands. This is not Southampton or the Indian Docks, but a fortified outpost of the English empire, useful for coaling homeward Indian steamers, and liable to hostile surprise. This is Gib, that Ford calls "a bright pearl in the crown of an ocean queen;" and

Burke, "a post of power, a post of superiority, of connection, of commerce, one which makes us invaluable to our friends, and dreadful to our enemies;" and, therefore, is not to be imperilled, Mr. Smirk, because you have not yet found your sea legs, and your wretched-looking stomach is queasy. Know that there are crowds of angry men sleeping under yonder quarantine flag off the harbour, merely because there is cholera at Hamburg, plague at Tripoli, and yellow fever at Vigo; yet the angry men submit, because England chooses to truckle to ridiculous timid Spanish quarantine laws. So, Mr. Smirk, it is no use your bribing the boatswain to pipe the men to haul up your army of brass-nailed, pompous-looking trunks out of the hold; it is no use to snub the first mate; nor will it comfort you to remind you that George the First's bewigged orators called poor old Gib "a barren rock, an insignificant fort, a useless charge;" and that Napoleon, when he could not take the lions' den, swore it opened nothing, and shut nothing.

"Pooh!" says the evening gun; "Bah, bah!" with a tremendous titanic Johnsonian shout of condemnation and contempt; "I may be a standing insult and threat to Spain; but I am a steel bridle to the Spaniard and the Moor. I guard Spain from the Frenchman and the pirate. I watch the Mediterranean. I dam up, if I choose, the Straits. Bah, bah!" and this it says with a bursting bold thunder

of fire, and a great sudden creation of angry white cloud.

But Gib has other features than this one word of threat that it nightly utters. I am one day in Spanker's rooms, Driver discussing, stretched on a sofa in full regimentals, worn out with night guard, the misfortune of Jones of the Fifty-fourth, who has been unlucky enough in a wild Mazeppa-ride, produced by the rum-punch for which Saint Roque is so justly famous, to run over a Spanish child,—that is to say, not exactly run over him, but to knock down and visibly contuse him,—much to the indignation of a Spanish father, whose intense grief can only be allayed by the bonus of ten dollars, which Jones, who is in debt at the billiard-table at the King's Arms, patriotically refuses to stump up. There is now a lively argument as to whether the consequent arrest of Jones, and the charge of recklessly riding over a Spanish peasant, is a fair one. Incessant are the official letters on folio paper addressed to Jones by adjutants and generals. Endless his replies—all turning on his jesuitical and crafty denial of having ridden over any *peasant* at all. An assembled meeting of subs, headed by Spanker, have decided that a child cannot be termed a peasant, or a peasant a child, and so the argument stands—Jones is worn out with letter-writing; a toil of brain he is not much inured to. His hair is touzly with scratching for an idea. His floor is strewn with copies of

letters, which rise in a heap above his shako, sword, and fatal riding-whip. The floor is studded with empty bottles of (red-labelled) Bass's. Ceaseless are the ferocious cries of "Double up—double up," addressed through speaking-trumpet hands, and with iron lungs, to Greenwood his servant in the distant barrack kitchen. If Jones is not broken, his constitution certainly will be. Immediately Spanker leaps up from a torpor and cries, "Why, you buffers, the Eighth disembark at half-past two, and it is two now,—come along, Greenwood, bring my mufti-hat." Greenwood, doubling up, brings Spanker his felt wide-awake with the turban of white muslin wrapped round the crown, he slips on his dust-coloured paletot and we are off, in defiance of the bees'-wax colonel, Stocker, and Major Hodgins of the Mounted Bombardiers, who, Spanker says, only knows five manœuvres, and has to be nursed by an old sergeant. It is torrid hot, scorching, ovenish; no one is out except a few perspiring sentinels of horse artillery, who, under their mats, shoulder their carbines, and try to look rigidly watchful as Spanker passes. We pass along the shore line of defences, pass the old Bateria of the Spaniard and some gangs of convicts lazily working, guarded by an officer with sword and revolver—and get to the transport harbour half way to Europa Point just in time to see the huge ark of a transport from Cork disembogue its armed men like a second wooden horse of Troy. There is not

much done yet, but broad planks are thrown from the tall ship's sides to the great stone quays, under whose sheds are heaped mountains of black coal ready to feed Government steamers. The quays are laden and piled with great sarcophagi boxes of officers' baggage and wine crates. The Doctor, in his feathered cock hat, is very particular about the regimental medicine chest. The Major is anxious about the plate-chest. Till these impedimenta are trolled off by the dirty shirt-sleeved soldiers of unpropitious face, the restless men must not land. But they continue on various pretexts to tramp in and out, eager and troublesome as boys in spite of the sentinels on the gangway, and the loud cries and threats of "Wirrasthrue, can't you be asy." "Mike Riley, keep in, you villain." "Can't you hear what the sergeant says." "Halloran, you thief, I'll report ye." Now the women come down—such women—such haggard wretches, dirty with the rough sea weather and the filth of wretched covered cabins—women, brazen, pale, neglected, with dirty hair, and with dirty children crying perpetually at their breasts. They descend in ghastly file under the coal sheds, a small drizzling rain now setting in, looking so homeless, wretched, and unhappy, that my heart bleeds for them. Now the men in grimy shirts, their hands and arms unwashed, descend, also buttoning their tight shining stocks, their heavy muskets in their hands, their knapsacks on their arms. In the midst of

them, waving a tin can, which drips with brandy, comes that mauvais sujet Riley, raving for drink. He runs recklessly down the plank — stumbles. Good God! what a piercing shriek the women gave. He is in down between the vessel's side and the stone rampart of the quay. Are the good-for-nothing villain's brains beaten out of him? No; there is a Providence for the mad and the drunk, the Spanish proverb says. He shouts and swears, as if somebody had pushed him in. Dozens of men fling themselves down after him. The chains are dark with men. They will drown him by encumbering him with help. He emerges, wet, screeching, violent; and is carried up into the ship. A moment after he appears again, fighting with a swarm of men, on the forecastle. They overpower him by numbers; a dozen to each leg, as he kicks and plunges like a mad horse, or a demoniac in a convulsion.

"Put Riley in irons," says the officer in command, who has been quietly walking with some ladies on the quarter-deck.

"The officers seem a pack of muffs," says Spanker privately to me; "I see we shall have a pretty trouble in Gib with these Irishmen."

"We've half a dozen fellars in the ship, surr," says a sergeant, coming up and touching his hat, "as bad as I think you'll find anywhere. They might as well be hung at once for all the good they'll ever do."

"Had a good passage, sergeant-major?"

"Pretty well, sir" (with great sternness). "Eight days from Dublin. Had a tidy little tossing in the Bay of Biscay."

Now the men, dressed and stocked, with bayonets fixed in a bright shining row, form on the quay; the band a little way before, with drums and fifes, clean and smart. The officers meet and chat. The ladies, smiling and gay, are handed down and congratulated. The loungers above, their white smocks showing through the embrasures, discuss the new comers not over favourably. Riley, handcuffed, is placed between two guardians, and seems to believe he has been promoted to extensive and onerous command; his only complaint is that the general gives him a guard of honour all to himself, but the "good old cock" does not offer any brandy. Now mysterious words of command run along the scarlet line, there is a shuffling sideways, a veering, a clanging, and the regiment moves along with a measured one two tramp as of one man. They pass up the quay steps, and march along to the Windmill Barracks, "unhealthiest on the Rock," to the clang and hammer of the full band of a noble regiment sent to welcome them. The new Gib bus bears us back, amid a cloud of coaches and mounted officers in white canvas shoes, who carry horse-tail whips to keep off the importunate flies.

This was the landing—but I also saw an embarka-

tion for India, a much pleasanter and more cheerful sight, though perhaps more fallacious in hope than the other was in disappointment. I was walking one day near the same place, watching the King's batteries salute a Turkish frigate. First a puff of smoke, then through it a sharp sudden sting of fire thrust out and withdrawn like a serpent's tongue, then a bellow before the clotted white smoke had ceased to hang about the guns. A mounted officer meets us and asks us if we had heard that the Fiftieth were just embarking for India. We shall be too late if we do not hurry. We hasten. We meet an artilleryman, and ask him if the transport is under weigh. He says he does not know; but the blue Peter is flying at the fore. Just as we get down, the commanding officer, for whom they have been waiting, is putting off in his boat. A hot quick ride he has had from the Governor's house, along the dusty Alameda, with its aloes and cacti. The shore rope is tightening and dipping, the anchor is up. I hear the last tug of the capstan, the last tramping chorus of the soldiers who help the crew. There are some sweethearts of the band near me, waving their handkerchiefs to two fifers, who seem afraid to appear interested in them, but wave signals, too, surreptitiously. There are a few soldiers looking back at Gib, thinking of its Black Hole and brandy shops. Some ladies gay upon the quarter-deck: on the shore a wail of deserted wives. But careless of all this floats out the brave strong

ship, red flags flying, the band's mechanical "Auld Lang Syne" greeting us by whiffs as, passing the French ship that mans its yards, she grandly rounds the rock corner, and disappears eastward from our eyes.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ROCK.

I AM just in from a note-taking walk in London streets. Let me empty my full game-bag of my pennyworths of observations, or at least of a brace or two of them.

FIRST. — The pleasant, thoughtful face of that sweet-eyed maiden that I saw through the sea-green, weedy aquarium in the window at the fish-tackle shop in ——, reminding me of the Indian sea-nymphs, whose eyes you see, or think you see, glistening between the pink coral fans at Bermuda, or the mermaids who, off the Orkneys (in old ballads), call the flocks of fish together by an enchanted song.

SECONDLY.—The flame leaping up at the lamplighter's touch, like a little nimble spirit, that says, "Here I am; what do you want with me?"

But, if I go on, I shall be all night, and this pleasant early spring-day, when the purple violets and the gold spikes of the crocuses are gay in the suburban gardens, and one almost expects to see the hard, gray London paving-stones sprinkled with flowers, will

go by without my getting to Africa at all. Bad luck to it.

THIRDLY.—Those round lit lamps in the dim office in Chancery Lane, that looked in the growing dusk like large luminous orange fruit.

Well, but Chancery Lane is not the nearest cut to Africa.

Hallo! my fancy, come to heel now, whither dost thou go?

A night does not seem much to me to see Africa in, I must allow. A day is not much time, even in this electric age, to study some millions of people, and some hundreds of thousand square leagues of elephant-trodden country. I am not going to say it is, however; so let us have no words about that; and as a quarrel, like a duel, requires two people, if one of them will not fight and will not dispute, all I say is—Where are we?

I will tell you, if you give me time, how it was that I only spent a night in Africa, that "dry-nurse of lions;" and although I know about as much of Africa as the intrepid French navigator to Pegwell Bay would of England, if he took his impressions from that shrimpy shore alone, I must assert that that one foot-touch of the shore of Barbary from which the conquerors of Spain once launched their galleys, has given a sense of reality to my thoughts and reading, whether I take up Livingstone, Livy, or the great sporting traveller Gordion Cramming, that

nothing else could. If I have not seen Tunis, have I not seen the range of the Lower Atlas, the Rif pirate country, and forty miles or so of the torrid shore bearing away from the Ape's Hill opposite Gibraltar to Tetuan and Tangiers? If I have not been on a camel in Fez, I have met men with faces still scorched by that city's sun. Have I not been on vantage ground where, like Moses, if I could not enter, I could at least see the Promised land of the Future, and the golden region of the Past? Though condemned by an unkind Providence to cackle and strut about the narrow poultry-yard of my small Spanish experiences, I have been once enabled to flutter up to the outside paling, and get a glimpse of the adjoining fields. But I shall never get to Ceuta, the Spanish outpost on the African shore, if I do not get back to Gibraltar and the table-d'hôte dinner, where I and Fluker, the artist, organized the expedition.

The brazen bellowing of a gong had just called together the incongruous guests at the Club-house Hotel, when a pluffy Indian curry-skinned Major, going home on furlough, who had been manœuvring, by help of one of the fluttering tiptoe waiters, a perfect howitzer of a telescope, which was erected as if to answer the fire of the batteries just outside the hostelry, announced something doing with the telegraph. The telescope commanded, as I had been respectfully instructed by a one-eyed touter with his arm in a bandage, a view of the flag-staff that stood like a

washing-pole up by the evening gun on a ledge at the top of the rock, whose signals, instantly reported to the Governor, who lives in the cosy convent down in the town, inform him of every vessel that passes the Gut.

About this staff and its doings every Gibraltar man is perpetually talking, when he is not cursing the five days' parade, the heat, the Spaniards, his barracks—colonel—or his cursed luck at unlimited loo. All eyes at spare moments turn to this brazen serpent—this standing column of news—this daily telegraph. At garrison parties sickly-looking, sickly-speaking young lions come in with news of the flag-staff; at the theatre it is whispered round; at parade it is talked of in dumb language. It is to Gibraltar what "the weather" is to London, and "the turnips" are to the country.

So now, as Major Macgillicuddy, of the mounted Bombardiers, comes panting in to say the P. and O. steamer *Tagus* is passing Europa Point, the soup is forgotten, and there is a rush to the howitzer. Yes, even Fluker, though caring nothing about the *Tagus*, and knowing that the *Tagus* cares nothing for him, runs out with the card of signals that hangs in the hall of the hotel in his hands.

Make haste; more doing at the staff—two red balls hauled down again—now one black, then one white—then one down and the other up: two red, that means "beef-boat from Tangiers just arrived;" one black, "followed by steamer;" white, "English steamer;"

and last flourish of black and white together, which, being interpreted, means that "it is the *Tagus* from Southampton, with mails." Hurrah! says all Gibraltar, all looking as we are; then we shall have letters—cheques for young ensigns unlucky at the green cloth, and with scores at the Gilt Grapes—billets for colonels' daughters, sighing for Rotten Row and the Rotten Rowers—news of children to mothers, and of mothers to children—news of deaths that will make men smile and look happy—news of deaths that will with a strong hand suddenly squeeze the heart dry as a wrung-out sponge; so runs the world away. The scuttle of feet down to the Waterport Gate to see who have come by the steamer, is audible to fancy's ear, as we turn satiated of news to our soup, that, offended at our neglect, has turned cold.

The table is remarkable for having more silver than meat on it, a peculiarity not unusual at showy hotel dinners. There is much napkin and little comfort—many servants and few dishes; a characteristic of the climate is the uncarpeted floor, the open but thickly-blinded windows, which seem to lure in the sun and turn the place into a furnace, now that the irritable hot wind is blowing. The stale fruit and fossil pastry is covered with blue gauze covers, ugly and deforming on a dinner-table as blue spectacles on a white man's face. We have no band to play for us, but the gnats at intervals give us the "Dead March in Saul," gratis, and we pay them with the

Genii's blessings, which are curses. Their music is as of the March wind confessing its crimes through a melancholy man's keyhole.

I can hardly get on with my roast fowl and water-cresses, for watching Major Macgillicuddy doing battle with the mosquitoes. They have been attending on and tapping him for thirty years, and yet he and they are not yet on real terms of intimacy. Now and then he repeats what I suppose are prayers to himself, as he brushes them from his damask cheeks; now he flings down his knife and fork, and strikes out at them right and left, as if he were mobbed by Spanish bravoes. They are irritating, and I sympathise with him; but still it is ludicrous to see a big ogre of a man doing angry battle with such tiny and all but invisible adversaries, though they are as troublesome and invisible as the mischief-makers and scandal-mongers of the world, and about as invulnerable to blows.

If you listen abstractedly to the conversation, there is only one observation in which everybody seems to agree, and that is one that runs round the table like fire through dry grass. "There is no place like England;" another way of saying, "There are no people like the English;" which means, "No people like ourselves." Without us I often feel the world would be a dunghill. Now the Major, a hero with mosquitoes, a bully with inferiors, a toady with superiors, I should say is busy hobnobbing, in choice

Saint Jullien, with two young officers (Whipper and Snapper) in full scarlet, admirably adapted to a sun almost African, with crimson webby sashes and bullion epaulettes, who, being on duty in the square adjoining, have thought it their duty to come and have a "blow out" at the table-d'hôte. They are affable and condescending, as English officers always are with strangers, talk loud, ogle the ladies, sneer at every one else, and show themselves perfect men of the world, by ostentatiously and unmistakeably despising the world of which they are men. They take off their drab felt wide-awakes, bandaged with muslin turbans, and fling them on a tray of wine-glasses on a side table. They whip off their unused swords and belts, and clash them up to a nail, with the practised skill of diners-out. They then, first of all, with defiant duelling glances, turn up their eyes, pull down their bat's-wing, espalier, gummed whiskers, furl up their mustachios out of way of the soup, and begin with an ease that a severe man would rather call impudence than ease. Their conversation is by gasps, as if their intellect was secreted in homœopathic drops, and was to be used carefully, like an expensive cordial not easily replaced.

As for Fluker, he is busy discussing with an old wine-merchant the merits of Colares, a cheap chesnut-coloured wine that is to be had for nothing abroad, and sold for a good deal in England; a sort of wine eventually to be sold as a "high quality

sherry," and many lies told over by sham connoisseurs of spurious vintages. There is much babble as to whether the wine has lost its body or not. Some one says it never had any; others say it still has a good deal. My conviction is that no one present but the old wine-merchant knows Colares from quinine, but I do not say so. What a very curious thing it is that human nature, when it hears anybody talking about wine, must hold its glass immediately up to the light, as if forming some intensely wise opinion about the matter, but determined to laugh in its sleeve at all mistakes, and say nothing to criminate itself! The fat old lady, good-natured, of course—fat people always are, they cannot help it—who has a face that several juries, one after the other, seem to have sat on, sips and looks wise. The little, pale, simpering woman near her looks through the decanter, which draws us all like a magnet. Fluker studies its colour, and thinks burnt sienna would do it. Fortywinks, the great traveller, knits his brows ferociously wise, determined at last to think or die in the attempt. A few hours of such mental exertion, carefully kept up, must produce an idea. But what will be the consequence? It is dreadful to think of.

Whipper and Snapper's (the young officers) conversation is "shoppy," and not varied. They pity those poor devils at the Windmill Barracks. They hear the Three Hundredth is going under tents. They

hear Silverstar has been scratched for the Scurry sweeps. They are told that Flanker lost a whole year's pay last night at hazard; and that Solomon, whose wealth is a proverb (haw, haw), will not down any more rhino. Jones, of the Fifty-seventh, has killed another horse, and Driver is going to be cashiered. Verdi's opera last night was "stunning;" and weeds are not what they were.

I dare say I should have learned even more than this, had not a scuffle of soldiers' feet, and a grounding of muskets, been at this moment heard outside. It was the commanding officer visiting the guard-house. Whipper slips on his belt, and is out. Snapper tosses off his wine, and flings down a half-finished bunch of raisins. Every one present draws a breath, as if a tight hand has been removed from their gullets—such a restraint are even two unsocial, insolent, and retractile men in a party.

I seize the occasion to propose a trip to Africa. Every one applauds it, but no one but Fluker, the colourist, will go. He wants to see the Africa of Scipio and Hannibal, the Africa of Saint Augustin and the Corsairs, of the Berbers and of Carthage. We toss our napkins on the back of our chairs, leave the half-severed melon to the parliament of flies, always willing to sit, and summon the waiter.

The waiter with the immobile yellow wax mask of a face comes, napkin pinched under his left arm,—"Africa-sir-yes-sir;" he will be gone, and anon he

will be with us again. He will go to the Four Corners, the cross-roads where the sea captains pace and bargain. He will then look for Ben-Hafiz, the Arab captain of the Ceuta Zebec, *The Young Man's Escape*, who was generally to be found smoking his cheroot, and quite in the clouds at the tavern called the "Good Woman" (a woman without her head), in Bombproof Alley. He will bring us the Padrone, or report progress.

The party now break up with a general slide and shuffle back of chairs, and turn to the epergne, the bustle seized by the Major as an opportunity to fill his glass, and attempt to throttle the decanter.

A few of us betake ourselves to the square, where some of us squat on the low wall, and others have chairs and think of Bass, as we turn our eyes inward to certain silver tankards that, though not of Cellini workmanship, very well answer our ends. Others of us aim the howitzers at certain shelves and ledges of the great wall of rock that faces our square, now rummaging a gunner's house, now reconnoitring a grinning battery, now hoping to see the famous apes that never are seen. We beat all over its gray, mottled service, bare, storm-beat, grand; that vast rampart wall of rock on which the gun-fire has rained and the lightnings burst—God's fire and the devil's fire—and left it still steadfast and all unchanged.

What is that moving like a hopper on a double Gloucester, along that central terrace where the last

gun is? Can that be anything human clinging there like a fly to a ceiling, a wild goat to a Welsh crag, or a sea boy to the rigging? Yes, I can make out, through my circle of glass, two mules, one led, and one with a person upon it—I think a lady—coming down, I suppose, from Saint Michael's Cave, or the Flag Staff. Small as a toy figure she is, I declare. The old wine-merchant is praising Pemartin's sherry, telling us the way to cook the West Indian Grouper fish, and laughing at a friend's plan of putting Colares into old Madeira casks, and selling it by mistake for the same sum—when the waiter reappears.

With him comes Ben-Hafiz, the Arab Padrone of the Zebec. The news is bad. We are walled round with diseases and quarantines. The black death was at Tetuan, and the beef-boat, on which the garrison depends for provision, was that morning stopped. Cholera was at Hamburg, which check-mated England, and all ports that way. The yellow fever was at Vigo; and a new sort of plague, with boils under the arm-pits, was at Tunis. To Ceuta we could go, but only from Algeciras, across the bay, in the Spanish country. Every way, fourteen days' quarantine stared me in the face—fourteen days' solitary confinement without one solitary comfort—fourteen days' angling out of a port-hole, sick, yawning—fourteen days' living badly at your own expense—durance most intolerable, and not to be borne.

Now all the tricks of quarantine, that relic of past

barbarism, with its attendant fear, intolerance, and disregard of personal liberty, I had already had too much cause to know. Had I not seen the dreadful emblem of death, the yellow flag, flying in the bright little green bay of Vigo? Had I not, because arriving there half an hour after gun-fire, been kept from landing, and merely because I had looked on the dreaded flag, more terrible to its unresisting enemies than the flag of Attila or Napoleon, had I not been threatened, bandied about, and insulted at Oporto, kept in tremulous dread of not passing my "little-go" at Lisbon, and nearly plucked of my smalls at Cadiz? Had I not seen the good ship *Negress's* letters slapped about in vinegar, and passed through a stinking smoke, which is called "purification?" Had I not marked the insolent caprice, purposely intended to vex and aggravate the hated English at Gib, with which, all of a sudden, without a minute's thought, in some pet or blue-devilishness of the governor, or alcaid, or post-master, a Spanish town was put in quarantine? Spaniards do not care for time, so how can they appreciate the vexation of delay to industrious Englishmen? They know the quarantine disposes healthy men to disease. They know that a slight attack, that on shore might yield to a dose of medicine, and prove, perhaps, not yellow fever at all, in a ship, in a state of anxiety and depression, must necessarily prove fatal. They *know* as well as I do, that a cooped-up hulk, cranky, and reeking

with bilge-water, will turn to a charnel-house if the epidemic once appears—so that, to keep one sick man from endangering a town, they condemn thirty or forty, may be a hundred, innocent men to death. They know all this; but who can reason with a Spaniard about a custom that is merely good because it is old; merely retained because some cowardly royal fools once instituted it. As well drop on your knees and entreat a springing rattle-snake not to sting—as well take off your hat to a starving lion—as well offer your watch and ten pounds' reward to a turning shark to let you go.

An official Spaniard takes a brutal, hard, unreasoning pleasure in enforcing an old barbarism, all the more if it chafes and torments the accursed heretic that holds the key of the Mediterranean firm in his ruddy right hand.

There is much talk about dollars; quarantine just out against Tangiers and Tetuan—beef-boat stopped, &c. The Arab, grave in his haik and rhubarb papooshes, puts in each new difficulty like a sword-thrust. Our arguments are run through and through. He is going over with the Spanish mails from Algeciras to Ceuta, at ten to-morrow. Our fare will be only the Government fare of ninepence. We must get letters from the Spanish Governor at Ceuta, and they will be the only passport necessary. We agree, and shake hands on the bargain, I and Fluker, the Pre-Raphaelite artist. The rest of the day is to be

devoted to seeing the batteries. Our old friend Spanker goes with us, in truth, as our cicerone, and we mount sloping alleys from Waterport Street.

"I do *hope* you like Gib," says Spanker, with a tone of paternal concern, which is an amusing evidence of the way self-love appropriates all it approaches. "It need be strong, I tell you, for what with plotting refugees, runaway smugglers, escaped thieves, sham cigar-makers, and its hostile and threatening garrison, it is a sad eyesore to the Spaniards. It is a core of heresy in a Catholic country, a gathering point of rebellion, a free port, a place where we offend their pride by stopping and opposing every custom they have but that of quarantine. I think they'd eat us without salt, if they dared. Only yesterday, on the neutral ground, one of their beasts of officers splashed me all over, on purpose, as he rode by; and then, when I cut him in the face with a back-handed blow of my whip—scissors, what do you think he did?"

"Don't know."

"Drew his toasting-fork."

"And you?"

"Knocked him down, of course, and left him there, till the Spanish guard came up, with whom I put him in arrest, for insulting an English gentleman and officer."

"The Spaniards must like you very much, Spanker, if that sort of thing goes on often."

"Oh, they dote on us; but here we are at Willis's Battery. I'm blowed, how hot it is. Shouldn't you like a sherry-cobbler? I went into the King's Head as I came to you, but there was no one there but a pill (doctor), a porker (commissariat), a nabitant, two salamanders, and a scorpion, so I would not have anything. I'll wait till mess, when you are gone, old fellow. Look out, now, at the batteries below. There is the Snake in the Grass, and the Devil's Tongue, and the Victoria, and the Orange Bastion — ugly customers, all; aren't they, sergeant?"

The artillery-sergeant in the white jacket, dangling a tremendous bunch of keys from his finger, replied, "Yes," with an air of self-conviction, "we've got a matter of a thousand guns on this 'ere rock, when we chooses to mount 'em."

"Why, sergeant, I thought there were more than that?" says Spanker.

"Well, sir" (military salute), "at a shift, we might pack on another five hundred. As it is, we could blow any fleet, Roossian or Proossian (they always go together), slap out of the water. There are more works, too, sinking outside the old batteries. Let 'em come in a year or two, that's all! I say, let 'em come! They'll never take the rock, then, unless they drop soldiers on us out of the clouds."

We went up gravelled and sanded paths — twist and turn — blasted out between low walls of rock, those scorched grooves that looked like weevil runs

from the howitzer at the Club Hotel door in Commercial Square; from this high rock platform on the high poop-lanthorn of the rock facing the Spanish lines, I see the neutral ground dotted with the white anthills of English tents.

On we went, the patriotic Sergeant Tompion ceremoniously unlocking for us palisaded gates, and huge masses of padlocks that clamped up the Lazarus-tomb and cave-like mouths of the subterranean passages, the works of Boyd and Jones, Eliott and Don, or some of those brave men who have, here, for our England's sake, borne the burden and heat of the day on this burning and impregnable rock. On, past small open plots of ground outside the cellars, mines, or small Thames Tunnels, where, on curious revolving frames, and with strange dial-face scales, and levels for elevation and depression, are the—I don't know how many pounders watching, in their blind and owlish way, the strip of sand below, and the green sea-purple, with drifts and bars of shadow, with their cyclop black eyes, after the manner of sentinel cannon in general.

This, the sergeant, assuming a Ciceronian or oratorical air, informs me (Spanker looking on as if he knew all about it, which he doesn't, and billiard-balling on a wall with his stick), was called Willis's Battery, from a deserter that, during the great siege, went over to the enemy, and, of course, from his professional knowledge, being an artilleryman, "he was

sorry to say, knowing all angles and curves of fire, and all paths of shot and shell from and to the wide loopholes, gun-ports, and terraces, raked and swept this quiet spot on which I then stood. He sent in a shot marked with his name, to let us know his revenge. The men could at last hardly be kept loading and sponging at the guns; and what was worse," added Tompion, digging his heel into the gravel, and clapping the biggest gun affectionately on the breech, "the murdering villain was never captured." N.B. —It is a curious fact, that non-commissioned officers, like lady's-maids, like long words; a plain private gunner would have said "caught," but Sergeant Tampion preferred the more dignified word "captured." Fluker, lost in rapture at the glitter of the great sea below, studded with flocks of ships, stops here to make a note on his thumbnail, as Hogarth used to, of the green veins in the inshore sea, which he foolishly compares in colour to veins of malachite. Spanker, not understanding the pictorial line of conversation, stops him by asking me, what I would bet he would not come in first at the next Gib Races,—a broad bet I refuse to take, though Crinoline is, I dare say, a very excellent horse, and three-quarters blood.

I cannot help, novice in the art of war that I am, trying to realize the old Drinkwater days, when fire must have rained, and blazed, and burst upon this spot of English ground, where the heath flower

now blooms purple, where I stand, looking towards Spain. What filing of bayonets there must have been, what quick signal beats of the drum, rolling along in scurrying echoes; what mournful processions of torn and bleeding men, carried down to their graves outside the gate; what a hurry of shirt-sleeved, bare-armed, powder-black men, with dirty lips and bloody hands, through these long galleries, and across these battery terraces? It is almost ludicrous to look at these traversing carriages, and all the latest pedant foppery from Woolwich, in a time of peace. It must make one of those small invisible devils grin, who frequent Gib brandy-shops to fan brawls, and urge to desertions, murders, and suicides, to take a cool walk up here and see the elaborate preparation by earthworms of these fire tubes, to crush and smite other small creatures of the same species, who bear it, and think themselves heroes, because they get twelvepence a day and some garlic soup for that same Christian endurance.

Here Tompion stops me, just as I am plunging into another sloping tunnel, to show me across the neutral ground and Campo, the jagged brown rock that is called Queen Isabella's Chair, merely because it is scooped out like a saddle. Then we look out towards Europa Point, where the lighthouse rises like a white candle with a red wick, and nearer to Jumper's and Ragged Staff Battery. Gibraltar, the paradise of smugglers, monkeys, and partridges, lies before us,

and now a cooler, fresher air, as if direct from blessed England, makes every brown cheek redder and cheerier; our steps grow firmer, faster, and longer. We feel the home air, and are ourselves again.

Spanker is just beginning a long and not very clearly worked-out story (it requires a ground-plan to follow him), about how once, when he was on furlough from the West Indies, his vessel was water-logged, and the regiment was taken on board a Rio Janeiro schooner, which had to put back to Madeira for quarantine, because a drummer-boy on board had died of fatigue at the pumps and consumption.

Tompion wants me to look well about, as this is generally considered a remarkably pretty spot, and has been taken in a "pottengraff." Spanker stops, and wants irrelevantly to know if I'll go to the theatre to-night?

Tompion puts on an air of increased solemnity, which signifies that we have now got to something beyond the preface, something worth seeing. He flings open a gate, and we enter a new tunnel, something like the lower deck of a man-of-war, with embrasures cut like portholes at regular intervals.

They are each so many little alcoved rooms, with a gun-port cut out through the rock to command the lines, which appear small and burnt up below you. Tompion thinks it here necessary to become supremely professional. Spanker whispers "Devilish clever fellows all the artillery." Tompion squints

along the gun as if it was a fowling-piece, and he was at the Red House going to kill a thousand consecutive pie-fuls of pigeons for a thousand half-crowns. He rubs off an imaginary rust spot on the breech with a handful of tow (which looks like his own hair pulled out by the roots), shoves it right, and shoves it left, so that "the piece" traverses and enfilades either side of the Spanish Debateable Land, rickets it up and down with a sort of screw-winch (I am not strong in science); and now, from various holes and side-lockers of the alcove where the gun's food, furniture, and toilette traps are kept, draws out—just as a fisherman would fish from the well of a punt—different articles of shot and shell. Some in cases like large chocolate pots, some in bunches like grapes (fruit of Sodom indeed), some like poker-knobs: but none so elaborate as the old Armada shot at the Tower, with the chains and saws that sprang out as they flew or struck. We asked him about the smoke in the embrasures, if it would suffocate the men or render aim impossible. Tompion, looking as if he was writing to the *Times*, says, "No, gentlemen, certainly not, except in special kinds of wind, when it would blow back on the gunners."

I could fancy Tompion presiding at a siege with old Heathfield—Eliott looking on in gold and scarlet. How soon he would know all the tricks of his gun! how he would chide and encourage his eight attendants! how dapperly he would apply his

linstock! how they would cheer when a shot of theirs struck the head of a column, when they struck down a pair of colours, or sent a powder-waggon up to heaven!

But we loiter. On we go, Tompion *duce*, I feeling *incolumis* with such a *dux*; upon which Spanker laughs uneasily, and a little forgetting his Horace, says, "Homer was a d—— fine fellow, and, I dare say, liked his tumbler."

"Gentlemen, is that General O'Meara you discourse about?" says Tompion, wishing to come in; "as brave a soldier as ever gave the word of command. I had a brother served with him at New Orleans."

The clash of gates and some difficulty with a strict padlock gives me opportunity to smile audibly. Spanker joins me in whispers, "Rum old card, is he not?"

The roof of this tunnel still shows the marks of the pick and crowbar's tooth, and even the chiselled groove black in the lip where the blasting-powder was rammed; now a turn takes us past files of more cannon leering through portholes into the crowning wonder of the rock—"St. George's Hall."

It was smaller than I expected, and more of the chapel than the cathedral; but is still vast, grand, and wonderful, though my imaginations, which cost no great architectural labour in building, were vaster. It is a huge stone chamber, vaulted out of rock like

a bandit's cave in a "bellow drama," or a sea-king's home as never was in a seaside poem. It has six portholes on each side. When the guns are run out, it resembles nothing more than the gun-deck of Noah's ark. The broadside it gives in thunder is rendered possible by the fact that the hall is scooped out in a sort of snout of the rock.

"The Spaniards," says Spanker, showing his white teeth like a Skye terrier—which is his usual sign when he means to be funny—"say we chiselled the Rock out of them: but all I know for certain is, that we chiselled this hall out of the Rock."

Tompion, as in duty bound, ceases to torment us before our time with a shot with a wooden bottom, and laughs "consumedly," as they say in the old "stap me vitals" comedies. This grim hall, where one would only expect to find "Alonzo the Brave and the Fair Imogene," is a favourite place for Gib garrison picnics; and while they talk about blood and powder here, men make love, and besiege "that fort men call a heart." On those rock steps, leading to the higher passage, the snowiest book muslins sit and discuss cold fowl and the "effervescingest" champagner wein. Up that dark gallery, lovers sigh and wander, and get lost, and enthusiastically found again; and, indeed, play all the newest variations on the old, old theme of Love.

Hark! as they say in tragical night scenes, just before the ghost enters, to the "wind at prayers."

Is it not rare organ music, that grand piping the wind breathes through the flute-holes and arched embouchures that stare at each other for ever across the hall. What an anthem to England's dead and brave! what an unshaped pæan to her fame! what an unwritten and unwritable chant in the wind language, unpronounceable, but awful, whether in rigging or vulgar London chimney-pot! Ten thousand ducats could I but interpret it: one syllable of it, and I were a poet greater than O'Meara himself, or even the author of that fine epic, O'Ryan.

But Tompion now waves his keys: and as this is the cock-crow to the errant spirit, I must leave the wail of that sublime Niagara of melodies. I must never discover where that remarkable staircase winds up to, for I forgot to ask Spanker if it is a well or a ventilating shaft; and if I had, that most gifted of subs would be sure not to have known. As we screwed up, so we unscrewed ourselves back down the rock—Spanker to his underground bombproof quarters in the Emperor's Bastion, to dress for mess; and I to the Club-house Hotel, to attire myself for the theatre.

The details of that "screamer" of an opera it will not be necessary for me to go into, it being the not unknown "Trovatore," and the singers neither Mario nor Grisi: but this I will say, that the storm that broke over us during the second act was blue-black as indigo, and that the great, swift sword-cuts of the

lightning, with its stabs and probings of scorching fire, outshone the golden light, and scared us by turning the stage fire to mere glowworm pallor.

The grand way Spanker showed me home, and intimidated challenging sentinels by roaring "OFFICER," which seemed a night talisman, I need not, as I am just packing up for Africa, stop to any further describe.

CHAPTER X.

PREPARING FOR AFRICA.

I HAD squeezed Gib dry, like one of those oranges with the rough white kid linings that now lie in the London murky fireplace at my feet. There was not a drop more juice in it; I had sucked it just as I had sucked Seville. I had from the hotel window, through the green bars of the jalousies, watched the Moors at prayers, with their brown faces to the east; I had made a note of the purple pigeon's-neck ruffle of the sea, when the Levanter passed and skimmed it with its wings. On the subaltern's maxim of Never walk if you can ride, I had taken a flea-bitten gray from old Rhododendron's stables, where the hulk of the broken-down Hansom wallows at the door, and had gone all round the Rock, from Water-port Gate, where the plaided fish lie for sale, all round the Marble precipice, toothed with cannon, and grinning with embrasures, to Catalan Bay, that quiet, storm-washed fishing station, with its melancholy one officer on duty. I had been out to the Highlander's tents, been fêted with bitter beer, and had seen the

brave young officer who was thrown over the bridge near Roque, while scudding home from the cork-woods in "a state of rum-punch," as the camp phrased it. The guides, Rafael and Mesias, had shewn me everything for a few hard dollars. I had been introduced to the monkeys, and thought them deserving of promotion, as they sat chained to pillars, and dressed in little scarlet jackets outside Spanker's and Driver's doors. I had even, after a look in at the Romish church, which I at first mistook for the theatre, and another look at the half-Moorish Protestant church, clambered to the higher regions of the garrison library, where I had been shown, through a glass door, the awful Governor himself, terror of subs, reclining on a sofa, and reading the *Times* (*only* six days old) with infinite relish: a certain proof that he is of our common species. I had heard the Jews howling at their synagogue like so many invoking priests of Baal. I had been with Spanker on a tour of inspection through the barracks, and seen the men rolling up and ticketing their bedding, cleaning their belts, and polishing their muskets. In fact, I had done the Rock—subs, monkeys, scorpions, martinets, Jews, Spaniards, and all.

What a curious instance of human malice and perversity it is, that if you are going a railway journey, a kind friend always stops to read you the last collision and loss of life at Wolverhampton; if by sea, the Burning of the *Kent* East Indiaman is lent

you as a travelling companion. Now that I was going to Africa, Major Macgillicuddy would hold me by the button (that button he had already loosened), and tell me, in a low, bass whisper, that only ten days ago a brig had been brought into the government harbour, picked up by some vessel on the Barbary coast, with the name carefully scraped out, and the decks bloody. I had better take care. Was my life insured? Could he lend me a Colt's revolver, with all the latest improvements. It was a pity such a d—d pleasant fellow (here I blushed, of course) should throw away or risk his life to see a mere Spanish garrison-town. Did I know that it was the common talk of Gib that the Spaniards were about to proclaim war on the Moors, for their attack on Melilla? He had been, indeed, distinctly informed that chests of dollars were arriving every day, under convoy, at Algeciras for war purposes. The Emperor of Morocco, one account, very reliable too, said, had struck the Spanish ambassador at Fez, and threatened him with the bastinado, but Don Fulano had escaped at night dressed as a date-merchant to Timbuctoo. The beef-boat captain So-and-so told a friend of Colonel Martingale, who told Simms of the Hundred-and-Second, who was a bosom friend of his (Major Macgillicuddy's), only that morning (d—d good hand at roulette was Simms, and always bet on the red), that not a Spaniard showed himself on the walls at Ceuta but he was instantly potted by the Moorish

matchlockmen. Now I knew perfectly well the Major cared no more for me than he did for the last pack of torn cards he flung under the table, and that if my head dangled at the saddle of a Rif camel to-morrow night it would not spoil his appetite for one day. I knew, moreover, that the Major's hearsay was mere floating gossip, maliciously exaggerated to annoy me (some men cannot resist the pleasure of tasting the power of giving pain); and, moreover, as all indolent people do, he took delight in stopping another man's activity. So I replied nothing, but gravely nodded, and went off to pack up my out-at-elbows trunk, and hurry the Arab captain.

Pushing and elbowing through a crowd of red and green boats, with lateen sails bent back like a hare's ears when she runs before the hounds, I and Fluker, my artist companion, push off from Calpe, the Pillar of Hercules, which the jealous Phœnicians kept as a toll-gate, beyond which no strangers might pass, though they had no cannon then to shoot at them with as we have now. We do not care now whether the rock is like a couchant sphynx, or a bucket, as the Greeks compared it to; indifferent to us whether its name is Hebrew, and means a caved mountain, or Phœnician, and means the night watch-tower. We are going to the lion country, and leave the burnt rock for purblind antiquarians to grub about as long as they like. When Gib's gun-fire sounds to-night at Ave Maria time, we shall be far away, far away

from its videttes. Africa, a new quarter of the world, is all before us; so let that white fever-cloud hang about the flag-staff and Saint Michael's cave, where the treacherous Spaniards once hid, as long as it like. Let Colonel Martinet put the whole garrison on bread and water, and the Town-Major sweep the streets with grape. We are free!

To tell the truth—and why should I be ashamed of it?—I felt, as I put my foot into the bilge-water puddle at the bottom of the Algeciras ferry-boat, that slight fever of anxiety which travellers often feel on taking a sudden and uncertain step—a tremor such as the bravest man may feel, and which is a tingle of the nerves, not a chill of the heart. It is what men carrying scaling-ladders feel, and what the officer who volunteers to head a forlorn hope feels. It is natural, and not unbecoming the thoughtful, brave man. It is all very well to tell me that that young Guardsman I just met smiling and showing his teeth in Regent Street, with a bunch of violets at his button-hole, would not have felt so. For my part, I think the man who sees a danger, and yet faces it, is braver than the wild Irishman with the bloodshot eyes, who rams his hot head into the blazing mouth of an eighteen-pounder, and pays the natural consequence. You must remember, too, when you laugh at my hesitation at a mere five hours' sail, the difference all the world over between the outdoor man and the indoor man. My nerves

have all come to the surface, with much introspection, and the fretting of perpetual thinking. For certain things, I would let them cut my heart out; but you must not wonder if I do not smoke and sing all the time of the operation, as a sailor does whose leg is being cut off; or if I shudder just a trifle at the first glitter of the surgeon's knife. When I hint the possibility of danger to Fluker, he makes a face, and takes a look inside a tankard of bitter ale, and says, he daresay he shall "pull through;" and certainly, if his mental pull will be anything like that miraculous draught, that physical pull he took at the pale ale, I quite agree with him. Fluker was thinking of the jewel-colour of sea-water; of the effect of white sails against blue skies; of red-turbaned heads telling against white mosque walls; of the red scarf, that carries the colour through the picture; and I knew it was impossible to make him realize the fact that we might be swooped up in our flight across the Gut by a Rif galley. So I let him alone, knowing nothing but a torrent of sabres pouring on our deck would ever convince him that such infamous, illegal, unconstitutional, un-English conduct was possible, even in those very high latitudes. Besides, Fluker was one of those unpractical, unworldly men, who, if he had wanted to stick up on the door of his London chambers, "Gone in the country: back in a week," would have stuck it up with his diamond shirt pin, and not thought more

about it, except to wonder where he had lost it. Besides, if he had been taken prisoner, like Fra Lippo Lippi, the clever, erratic, improvising, lucky, inconsequential fellow would have painted a portrait of his master, and bought himself off in a week; or got prime vizier to the Emperor of Morocco, and married his daughter. So I let him hug his black tin colour-box, and go off to the boat, singing something about—

"Her hand is soft as a Guelder rose,
And every bit as white;
Her eye is dark as a summer eve,
Or a violet by starlight."

The ferry-boat is full of barefooted fisherwomen, who, grinning and chattering, load every one on board with English cotton handkerchiefs, which we are to smuggle for them. As for Fluker, who was ranting that the sea we were ploughing through was so much liquid sunshine, whereas it seemed, to my vulgar eyes, just a mere ocean of pale sherry,—one old Sycorax of a crone, with nutcracker mouth and hairy chin, so stuffed him with smuggled goods, that he was full up to the brim, sleeves, trousers, pockets, waistcoat—everything! A rival witch, who began to load me in the same way, I resisted, and put far from me, in spite of all her grinning and wheedling, and all the deprecating hand-wavings of the sturdy barefooted rowers; for we were not yet in the Robinson Crusoe zebec with the tawny red sails and

the painted Carthaginian prow of the true bean-pod shape. Swiftly, with the great whale-back of a rock perpetually in our eyes, (how the Spaniards, when you pointed at it and laughed, rose and clenched their brows, and shook their fists!) on we skimmed, and flew, and tacked, and wheeled in the Dantzic gold water of that luminous Pactolus. The men with their bare bull chests, toiling at the great oars, ran headlong about with the rope that the moving sail dragged and lugged at so viciously.

Now the white fort and low shore of Algeciras is in view, with the cocked-hatted officials in expectant vigilance on the rough stone jetty, on which, under a roof of mat, the lazy sentinel nods and drowses—the rising and falling of the empty boats slowly mesmerising him to sleep. Now the last bundle of cottons has been stowed away in hat and bosom, even some dried fish hide a small consignment of Manchester goods, and now we bump the shore in hasty recognition, and leap up on the broad slippery stones, in which process one fat old gentleman flops in between the boat and land, and is all but drowned. Fluker, intent on some emerald wash of water over stone, is busy with his red-covered pocket-book, which he is always consulting, like a priest his breviary—honest enthusiast for red hair and microscopic mustard and cress that he is. The old women are out sneaking with affected humility—treacherous Jaels, Judiths, and Delilahs, as they are—past the

grand officials, who pretend, with equally affected severity, to open every packet that they know contains nothing. The ferry boatswain has been round for pence, and we are at last landed, ready for the zebec that, with quaint latteen rig, I see bobbing and dipping out away yonder, where the cows are being "swum" off alongside of boats full of soldiers and herdsmen, all bound for the Seven Hills and Ceuta, on the African shore.

As I walk up to the hotel through the unthrifty sand, strewn with star-fish and intestine relics of departed mullet, not yet deodorised by the great scavenger sun, the Arab captain, who talks reasonable English, tells me that Algeciras is almost supported by the smuggling of cigars and cottons from Gib, as indeed are half the small towns on the neighbouring Spanish coast. The last Alcaid, he assures me, retired on quite a fortune realized in this patriotic and honourable way. The women I saw go over daily in the ferry-boat and daily smuggle. Every now and then, to keep up appearances, like the London police with London gambling-houses, the officers make a swoop, and clear out the whole trip of run cottons. I asked him if murders by robbers were common in Algeciras. The Arab, shrugging up his hood, said he had heard of but one in twenty years he had "used" the place, and that was an English gentleman, murdered near Ronda, by two escaped galley-slaves from Cadiz. The gentleman

was riding in the mountains; his sister stayed behind at a turn of the road to sketch, when she heard a shot; and, riding forward, found her brother dead; the thieves had, it is supposed, followed him and been lying in wait. They were both garotted, though the Spaniards petitioned hard for them.

Algeciras we found asleep as fast as ever. That scene of two great English victories seems never to have recovered those stunning blows on the head dealt by the English fist. Half-naked boys in dirty drawers still dabbled about the rocking fishing-boats. Vagabond loafers still slept with their backs to new landed bales and sacks. There were still the string of porters unloading millet from a Barbary barque. Still cows wading and swimming out to board distant Beef-boats. Still naval-looking soldiers, drinking aniseed on sea-side wall-benches. Still a distant salute from Gib, with jerking stings of sudden fire, and thumps in the sky as if heavy carpets were being beat.

All the streets and squares and bull-ring and Prado of that dead-carrion town I knew by heart, or rather by nose. I had even reconnoitred the suburb, so intensely Spanish, beginning with dusty lanes, hemmed in with deep irrigating ditches, walled by plantations of tall reeds that kept whispering some new court secret of Midas; then one-streeted villages of whitewashed huts, with dirty, naked, ophthalmic children dragging about fish-tails as playthings at the

doors; then a few rambling prickly pear and angry aloes that, as finger-posts, stretched their wild irritated arms to lead you to the rolling earth-heaps and parched mule-tracks of the open country. No green, spongy turf there—no gracious sheltering trees—no; mere brickyard refuse and Saffron Hill burnt-up lumber and strips of white and brown road, padded to dust here and there by scuffling mule hoofs.

I do not know what diplomacy is not necessary before we get our Ceuta passports. Much talking with Spanish semi-official sponges, who hang about our doors, drop in by accident just at dinner-time, have no objection to cigars, sip at our claret, brag of their national services, and of the governor's wisdom; and eventually, when we are sick to death of officialism and officials, bring us a sort of billet order from the tardy governor representing us as English officers on a visit of inspection to the Ceuta garrison. It gives us, if we like, a right to free quarters and food, and is altogether so solemn, condescending, and lying a document, that Ibn Hafiz, our Arab captain, treats it as a sort of Sultan's firman, and strikes his forehead and breast with it in true Oriental manner.

Thanks be to Allah! we are at last in the zebec: the *Young Mau's Escape*—just such a bark boarded Robinson Crusoe's vessel off Salee—and we are bound for Barbary. An occasion seized by Fluker to improvise a sort of nautical comic song, which he sings

to the delight of the grinning crew by snatches, in intervals of sea-sickness and note-taking:

"The white moon's flying fast, fast, fast,
Over the white-capp'd sea,
The scud is running arrow-swift,
And we're bound for Barbarie.

"Blue turbans watch us from the shore,
Across the gold-green sea,
For we bring a crown of topaz stones
For the Queen of Barbarie."

It was a throb and struggle of oars, that spread out now like swallow's wings, now like the legs of a centipede—a pull, a sway, a lug at a rope, and we were on board the zebec, where we soon, Fluker and I, took up our quarters, near the immensely long handle of the tiller, which, in true lazy Spanish fashion, was managed by a rope, held by a fat bare-footed sailor, who steered sitting down: which did not startle me, because I remembered that the helmsman of the Seville steamer, though a rogue, "tough as nails," had a sort of music-stool, to enable him to get through his laborious work.

The passengers are poor soldiers, smooth, brown-faced lads, going over with their mothers and sisters to join the garrison at Ceuta, and to furnish food for the Moorish vultures. They wore little boat-shaped blue caps with tassels, and dirty yellow jackets, linen trousers, and hemp sandals (at least those from Sancho Panza's La Mancha) on their naked feet. Their



SPANISH SOLDIERS ON BOARD A ZEBEC.

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knapsacks, made of calf-skin, with the chesnut hair outside, lay on the deck, with their tin pannakins for cooking strapped to them. Their muskets were, I observed, very rude and cumbrous. As for the rest of the passengers, they were mechanics, laden with mule harness, sacks of loaves, and fruit, and shook down into their places before the vessel had gone many miles, subsiding at last into perfect sea-sick Jonahs, who would have thanked you if you had pitched them over to any passing whale wanting a luncheon. As for the young soldiers, they began by placing themselves in gay and picturesque attitudes on the piles of fruit-bags, laughing and making faces at the poor women who sought refuge, covered up, in sleep, from the rising nausea and giddiness, as the vessel leaped and tripped over the waves that divided Europe from Africa. I, not despising, yet not much disturbed by the pitch and toss, and the rise and fall of the horizon, to which we seemed to climb, only to drop directly, sat and talked.

I and Fluker, indeed, to get out of the way of the sailors, who were singing a ballad about a certain Don Antonio, in chorus to the fat steersman with the merry greasy face and bashaw stomach just off duty at the tiller, threw ourselves on the deck (the pitch, which is sweating out from between the seams, not benefiting our small clothes), with our backs to the bulwarks, and next to a soldier, who is drinking from the spout of a jar in that curious Spanish way, which

requires you to hold the spout some distance from your mouth, and to let the wine pass in a red arch into your expectant gullet.

Presently, the captain, grand in his striped Bornouse, joined us, and lying down too (the song hushing, out of respect to the captain), he began to discourse on the wonders of Tetuan, of its boar-hunts, locust-trees, torpedo fish, and customs. "No ale and spirits sold here," said he, "written pleasantly there. The Prophet allows the Faithful no such indulgences; no, not even ginger-beer or shandy-gaff, or what you English call gin and bittares."

"He knows all our little national peculiarities, this captain," says Fluker, under-breath, as he fathoms his coffee-coloured meerschaum with his little finger.

"But then the Tetuan people allowed no cheating in the caravanserais. He himself (Ibn Hafiz) had been charged too much, and had to complain to the Moorish governor, who instantly sent two blacks to drag the innkeeper to prison. There were no Tarifa landlords there. Had I heard of the Tarifa landlord, and what he said to the Duke of Medina Cœli last June?"

"No."

"The duke lost his way, out quail-shooting, and had to spend the night at the inn at Tarifa. The next day, when the bill came in, the duke complained bitterly; and, by Allah! I think the infidel was right,

because the Spanish rogue had charged him a dollar a-piece for two eggs. 'Rascal,' he said, 'why, you can get eggs here every day two for a penny.' 'Yes,' said the fellow, grinning, as is the way of those cattle, 'but we do not get *a duke* here every day.'"

We laughed, and Fluker bursts out with—

> "The sea is washing emerald clear,
> The nodding palms I see,
> And I hear the cymbal beat, that shows
> We are coasting Barbarie."

The Arab went on: "I was myself born at Fez, and do not know much of those Tetuan people, whose manners do not resemble our own, though they believe in the same God and the same Prophet. You English would be surprised to see what I have seen at Tangiers. I was once there during the Ramadan, and saw the soldiers seize a man caught stealing a case of dates from Mequinez, the sweetest and most golden-dusted there are in all Africa. They did not want any trial. They dragged him, after a short bastinado, up to the wall of the market-place, where there was a large iron ring. There they pulled off his turban, tore up his sleeve, and thrust in his right arm, one soldier holding his shoulder, another his hand. Then a third, with a heavy scimitar, at one stroke struck off the hand a little above the wrist; clean, I tell you English gentlemen, as a cook cuts a carrot in two. They then rammed the

stump into some hot pitch, kicked him, and let him run. It is, however, the custom of these people to pursue the wretch, because, if left alone in the woods in pain and uncured, the blood only staunched, he would go mad. If you go, therefore, English gentlemen, to that Moorish city, take care of men with one hand, for they are rogues; and, above all, avoid men with both hands cut off, for they are the Devil himself."

"And how, Ibn Hafiz, does this humane system work?" said Fluker, who had been shrugging his shoulders, to express disapproval.

"Extremely well, English gentleman. People are so honest in that city, that if you were to-night to drop a purse of gold in the most frequented street, you would find it next day just where you left it."

"Come, come, old fellow," says Fluker, moved to speak, "draw it mild; you mean the purse, not the gold."

"The faithful man speaks faithfully," says the Arab, scowling, but still grave and quiet. "I speak of what I have seen." (Here some indistinct Arabic words, I am afraid not complimentary to Fluker's ancestors, particularly his maternal relation.) "Am I a dog, that I must swear by the Koran about everything I say? I tell thee" (the more angry the Arab got, the more Oriental and scriptural his language, I observed, became), "you English have your law courts, your wigs made of cab-horses' tails,

your black bedgowns, and skins of foolish animals: we go before the Cadi, who hears both sides, then drives every one out of the room, takes down evidence on a spare scrap of paper, gives his judgment, and tears up the record. That is our Arab way; and shall I be called a liar, and my father's grave be defiled, because your customs and ours differ?" (The captain here gave angry orders to reef, just to cool his temper.)

Fluker, rather frightened, said: "Why, old fellar, you ain't going to cut up rusty about that? I meant no harm. Here, let's fill your pipe with some of this bird's-eye: it's devilish good bird's-eye, I can tell you. So

> 'White roses bloomed in every cloud,
> White as the froth on the sea,
> As we shook out every bosoming sail
> To speed to Barbarie.'"

The captain relented, and went on telling us how nearly, he had heard, Prince Waldemar of Prussia, while sketching, had been cut off by the Rif matchlockmen, and related how he himself, a year ago, had all but fallen into their hands. He was with an Englishman of science, whom he was taking round the coast. They had been for an hour or two at the edge of a cave not far from Tetuan, trying to cut from a rock under water a curious sort of webby polypus nest, which the Arab described as netted like coral, yet fine as silk. They had partly suc-

ceeded, and had got back into the den, when they felt hands on their shoulders, and saw two blacks, who had been watching them. Before, however, the blacks could proceed to use their swords, the escort had rushed in, disarmed them, and tied them back to back with cords.

I do not know, indeed, what the irascible Ibn Hafiz would not have told us of the Rif men on camels, who come to Tangiers to buy at the market, had not at this moment Ceuta hove—I believe that is the right expression—in sight. For a long time Gib had been lowering and lessening—now to a Primrose Hill, now to a mole-hill, now to a mere mole on Ocean's cheek. We were at Ceuta; the town my countrymen, during the war, prudently garrisoned, much to the indignation of the ungrateful Spaniard.

Now, in the scuffle, jostle, and confusion of women's bundles, soldiers' knapsacks, leather mail-bags, and bread sacks, I and Fluker are all but forgotten. The captain is shouting at the shore, the sailors are shouting at each other, hauling at ropes, all but the steersman, who sits, much troubled and disarranged; for no Spanish crew will take a vessel in within a quarter of a mile of the shore. We are carted out into boats, into which, with acrobatic balancing and shin-breakings over oars and benches, we get, and are soon on the pier.

I see nothing in Ceuta—the town of Seven Hills;

the little decayed Rome, from whence the Berbers shipped to conquer Spain, slay Don Roderick, and furnish matter for that yawning epic of Mouthey's—but rows and angles of decaying ramparts, and a slope of houses that seem slipping off into the sea: but what I do see, and rejoice in, is far away to the right—the mountainous green hills—the image of those of Devonshire grown old—running down to meet the waves and hear the latest tidings of the conquered country; away yonder—of whose houses certain turbaned men here, in Africa, still keep the title-deeds and keys. There they stretch away like a rolling green desert, treeless but verdant, with only here and there the whitewashed walls of a Moorish hut to break the solitary grandeur of that greenness.

"There is one thing," I said to Fluker, as a rejoicing touter bore us off to the only inn of the place; "we are in Africa: that alone is a delight and a rapture."

"Keep saying Africa to me," says Fluker; "I can't realize it. It's more like going to Herne Bay, though I had one or two misgivings of stomach."

"One or two! how some men—but, there, never mind."

I said nothing; I was so proud of having set my wandering foot in Africa.

"Lead on!" said Fluker, grandly, to the touter, who had made himself a groaning Atlas under our

portmanteaus, forgetting he did not know English; but then Fluker, though he has sometimes a good deal of presence of mind, is generally so absent with his art and his verses. There, again, only hear him, in Africa, sing:

> "The whale is spouting fore and aft,
> The shark tears through the sea;
> But not so fast as our ship that leaps—
> Bound straight for Barbarie."

One or two suicidally idle soldiers fishing from the quay-wall for mackerel, were all the garrison we saw as we followed the intrepid touter along a pebble-paved jetty, past some stalls and dens for officials, who all but went on their knees when they saw our grand passport. It was not till we left the fortified gateways and the citadel to the right, and turned from the feverish, unquiet sea, up a steep, narrow lane, that we began to realize where we were. We were passing up between high, quiet white-washed garden walls with scented bunches of purple flowers hanging over in tropical wealth. Here and there a pomegranate-tree hung up its fruit out of our reach; here and there some African tree, whose name I did not know, tossed its blossom on us; and just as we were climbing still higher, Atlas stopped, shook down his luggage mountain in the doorway of a small dirty court, and said we were there.

This was the Fonda.

"Well, I'm sure!" said Fluker, hopelessly.

Atlas took three times what he ought to have taken with a grumble, wiped his forehead, shouted for the landlady, and stumped off. To our horror the landlady spoke nothing but Moorish, and though a good-natured woman enough, had no idea of putting herself to much trouble on our account, seeming to have no idea of our being a source of profit. She knew a few Spanish words, but we did it chiefly by dumb show. Our treaties were like the episode play in Hamlet, "the thing wherewith to try the conscience of the king." We asked for a room; she showed us up a dark, stumbling pair of brick stairs to a little dim bed-room, with a scorpion-nest of a roof, and a grated window commanding a view of the street.

As we stuck our heads out we heard a doleful drag and clink of chains, and a file of galley-slaves in yellow, led and followed by soldiers with loaded guns, trailed down the street; for Ceuta is the Botany Bay of Spain, and here the wretches die by thousands from climate, hard work, cruelty and neglect.

I've asked our hostess for beef?—No. Mutton?—No. Veal?—No. Fish?—No. Bacon?—Yes. Eggs?—Yes. Fruit?—Yes. Tea?—Yes. Coffee? Yes. Very well, then; good coffee, good and quick.

We sit down on our two iron beds and look at each other.

"If you call this Africa, I wish I was out of it. I am so doosed hungry?" groaned Fluker.

Oh! the crude nakedness of that dirty tiled room, with the scorpion ceiling and the truckle-beds!

Presently in came the dinner, two tumblers of brown ditch-water coffee without milk or sugar; black bread without butter, and some slices of brown old sow-bacon, swimming in black grease. For dessert two figs split open, and with a seedsman's drawer full of gold-seeds showing. You might talk, argue, reason; nothing more could be got out of our landlady. No meat is to be had in Spain after market hours; no one keeps any in the house. What is bought is bought for measured mouths. Butter is always scarce, and cheese in retired places all but unknown.

We eat in moody melancholy, and again, just as we are going to stroll out to see the fortifications, are startled by a clink and drag of chains. We look out, it is the long string of galley-slaves marching back with sullen decorum up the covered way of the street. Our walk over the town was not very fruitful. We got on the sea-wall and heard the Gibraltar evening-gun roar out at us like a released lion. We poked into small squares paved with black and white pebbles in patterns. We watched half the garrison driving a bull into the slaughter-yard by pricking him with bayonets; which, instead of making him quieter, gave the chase the appearance of a small bull-fight. We saw the bare yellow-legged Moorish interpreters hob-nobbing with the governor; under the guidance of

backsheesh-seeking Spanish artillerymen, we traversed curtain and ravelin, and all the angles and terraces of the fortress-walls; bought long tassels of purple and yellow flowers, strung with Moorish taste by a street-boy; purchased Moorish cigar-cases worked with dyed aloe thread, and stared at the immense tufted reeds that kept crying out to us in the gardens: "We are African!" We were dazzled by a review of two or three thousand men in the barrack-square; saw the raw recruits from La Mancha put through the difficult Hay-band — Straw-band! manœuvres, and retired to our beds, ready for the chivalrous touter who was to rouse us for the early zebec. We had had quite enough of Africa. One thing only puzzled us, that whether in the flower-arched lanes, the cactus-planted gardens, or dusty barrack-square, we were everywhere being saluted by soldiers and bowed to by portly officers. We could see clumps of them watching us from the batteries, and as we passed the curious arched cafés, groups of them turned to follow us, with their eyes, out of sight.

It was not till we were the next day arm-in-arm on the Gib Alameda, and the band beginning to strike up, that the reason for this singular courtesy and attention struck the sagacious Fluker.

"Why, by Jove," says he, "Blank, I know what it was made those fellows do the civil to us, so; it was our being put down as general officers in our

passports. I'll be hanged if they mustn't have thought we were on an official visit of inspection.

Said I: "Fluker! by Jove, you're right." And he was right, too. "For once—in Barbarie."

CHAPTER XI.

MY FAREWELL DINNER AT GIB.

I NEED not say that "Gib" is the fretful name—half of weariness, half of fondness—given to Gibraltar by its British garrison.

The *Negus* was to sail on the Thursday; and it was the Tuesday before that, as I was putting on my white Spanish canvas slippers, that that good fellow Spanker broke in, waving the white horse-tail fan which the hardier British officers generally carry when riding, and delivered his winged words thus to me as I sat hot and puffing with the exertion of shaving, reclining on a black, shining, stony, horse-hair dusty sofa in an upper room of the Club House Hotel:

"I say, old fellow, you're in a hole."

I looked down on the floor, and saw nothing to corroborate the gallant subaltern's friendly alarm.

"You've put your foot in it nicely."

I looked at my boot.

"Oh! don't be so doosed literal. We are all in a hole."

"What! have the Spaniards undermined us!"

"Oh! I say, old fellow, none of your chaff. It's so infernal hot. Got any bitter beer? Bitter keeps a man's pecker up."

I rang for Bass or Allsopp. "Utrum horum?" I said. "My dear Spanker, I admire your genius, I respect your courage. I regard you with unmixed admiration, barring your eyeglass ——"

Here Spanker's eyeglass dropped out like a glass eye carelessly put in, and hung by a quivering string or ligament until further reconnaissances on the enemy were required.

"With unmixed admiration, both as an officer and as a Christian."

"Come, no chaff, old man," groaned Spanker, red and thirsty, in a languid and prayerful voice, as he looked out of window. "I say, here's the Town-Major's daughter going by with such a stunning pink bonnet.

"Let Dalilah go by in peace."

"Her name isn't Dalilly—it's Dorothy. We call her at mess Dolly. Driver is no end of spooney in that quarter. Talk of her, and see how red he gets; just like a lobster when you put it in hot water."

"Well, I suppose *you're* always in hot water, and that is why *you* get so red."

Spanker's eyeglass slipped out again (like Barnacle's) in the agonies of a sneeze.

"Will you come and ride out to the cork woods,

and have some milk punch at Saint Roque? It is the right thing to do, I believe," said I.

"Thank'ee, old fellow; but I'm off directly to that infernal Watergate, to read the paper till seven to-morrow morning. Delightful profession! delightful climate! delightful Colonel!—so fond of me!"

Here Spanker broke off his irony, fixing his glass in his eye as one would push a cap on a gun-nipple, and abruptly rushing to the head of the stairs, he roared, with a ten-pounder voice, "Now then, look alive with that beer, will you!" the "will you" twisting up in the way a whip-lash laps round an urchin's legs.

The beer was "looked alive" to; and a waiter, pinching the indispensable napkin under his arm, entered with such haste that you would have thought he had just brewed the beer, and was serving it up before the bloom was off.

I was uneasy, because Spanker was decidedly so; his glass kept dropping out like a ripe nut out of its husk. First he would look at one spur, then at the other; then he brushed the dust off his boots with a clean white handkerchief; then he got up, and looked out between the window-blinds at the sun and the fortifications, as if he had just landed, or like a merchant who was anxious for his argosies. Then he sat down, looked at me, brushed the white bitter froth off his mustachios, coughed as if I was Dorothy and he was going to propose, or to have a tooth taken

out—much the same thing; and then flicked off, with a Brummel particularity foreign to his nature, a pin's-head of dust from the left knee of his red-striped un-nameds. Only a man going to borrow money, or confess love, ever looked such a fool. As sure as I looked at him, out fell his eyeglass, as if my look had knocked it out. Was he going to ask me to be second in a duel, or to ask me to back a bill? I will back him as a friend, but not as a borrower; for

> "The lender loses both his gold and friend;
> And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry."

That, I thought, is a quotation applied before now to needy friends; but it is none the worse for wear, and will do as well again. Spanker will think it is a verse of Leviticus, or one of the Ten Commandments.

So we lay like two wily combatants, eager to draw first blood, yet both somewhat mistrustful of the other.

"I was up late last night," said Spanker.

"Which means early this morning."

"Not exactly. But I say, old fellow, you won't be angry? I know you hate publicity and all that bosh."

"Anything," I said, "for you, Amigo mio, Spankerus meus, except to be second in a duel and first on a bill."

"Duel! Bill! Bill who? Dual!—that's singular."

"No," said I, "dual is plural. A man can't fight a duel by himself; you want help. I see it—you get red."

"Bosh! I always am red—it's this beer. I want no second or third either. Solomon does all my bills, and endorses them Vanity of Vanities. You know Solomon who keeps the cigar-shop in Waterport Street? Good fellow, but wants such interest: makes me always take half South African Cape, which is not the Cape of Good Hope (ha! ha!). The fact is—and I must bring it up at once, for I never can keep a secret—you're doosed popular at Gib, and we are all intending to give a doosed good dinner at the Club House the night you sail. Now don't say No. Dinner ordered: twenty covers, and claret by the bucket. The Hundred-and-Fortieth band is engaged; and it will be a bang-up feed, I can tell you. One word: Don't ask me to return thanks for Army and Navy; I'm no hand at jawing."

"Who will be there?"

"Why, Driver and the Doctor, and Forbes and Thompson, and all the fellows you travelled with in Spain, and who are going back in the *Negus* with you. The Major will wig me for letting the cat out of the bag, but I can't help it; and you might, you know, want,—you know, to put—to draw up, you know, some speech or some——"

"Spanker, you are a good fellow. I shall need some preparation; but don't make me notorious and ridiculous by sending off a paragraph to *The Times* about the dinner."

"Mum's the word," said Spanker, reading the Bass label as if it was a hieroglyphic not yet deciphered, or a leaf of one of the lost books of Livy.

Five minutes after Spanker left, in came the Major on heavy tiptoe to tell me the secret also. I coloured, started, and did the bashful and grateful M.P. My acting would have been worth pounds on the hustings. No M.P. who has just received a rotten egg in his eye could have bowed more magnificently than I did. It was a mixture of George the Fourth and the young Duke of Richelieu. It was a sight alone. The Major kindly said that Gib would be as dull the day after I sailed as a doctor's shop in a healthy season. I bowed again. This time I took for my model the Marquis de Carabas, with a soupçon of the playfulness of Titterly, the wit at the Athenæum Club.

There were all my old friends, I found, to be at the farewell dinner. Fortywinks, the great traveller, still intent on his book about Spain, and devoting his generous life to correcting the prejudices and aberrations of men he met at *table-d'hôtes*. There were to be Spanker and Driver, of course: the very Orestes and Pylades of subalterns—always reckless, frank, noisy, kind, and inconsequential. There was

the grave Mentor of Granada, the immortal guide Bensaken, who had just luckily come from that Moorish city he so much adorns, with Lady Pentweazle and her four daughters—snub, pert, squat, smart, and reddish. There would be Mr. Doolan, our Xeres wine-merchant, now at Gib on business, and Don Sanchez Balthazar, the chivalrous enthusiast of pictures and ballads, to whom Spanker had written from Seville on purpose. Rose, too, was now in Gib, fresh from an excursion to Ronda, where he had extorted much money from a party of tourists by pretending to bribe off a sham band of brigands, got up with a true artistic sense of costume —all dirt and ribbons. Fluker, who accompanied me to Barbary, and saw so much, has been staying to paint a portrait of the Town-Major, the hair of whose head seems all to have run down into whiskers, and is waiting, like me, for the *Negus*, and will not be forgotten as an honoured guest. Major Hodgins, the voluble and demonstrative, who let me ride over the Raisin mountains alone, will be in the chair, because, as Spanker flatteringly tells him, he is "such a jolly good fellaw;" but, really, because he has undauntable brass and the voice of a bull. To these I must add Niggle, the north-country lawyer, who querulously contradicts, in a cracked tip-toe voice, almost everything from Murray; Spry, the American tourist, who has just left his rooms at the Alhambra on his way back to Bawstun;

and Lispin, the admiralty agent, a languid official who never speaks if he can shrug his shoulders instead. Old Blowhard, of the *Negus*, was to be there if he could. The Reverend Walter Monoculus, travelling tutor, with the Honourable Sidney Limpet, would not fail, I knew, though now at Tarifa; because the Honourable Sidney was on his way back, post haste, to take up a place in the War Office, kept for him by a noble relative, and to which, I am sure, he will stick as long as England remains a mummy swaddled up in red tape. Then there was Herr Schwartzenlicht, the German picture-collector, with the blinky eyes and Judas beard, who tormented me before my time at the Murillo Gallery, &c. &c.

The excitement was beginning. It was four o'clock, and the Club House Hotel was like one immense boiling pot. The roof seemed actually to shake with the agitated motion of touters, odd men, and waiters anything but dumb. The roof shook like the lid of a pot when the potatoes are jogging up and bumping to get out, finding the white bubbled water getting too hot for them. The uncarpeted stairs of the hotel were being played upon by feet, as if they were the key-boards of some perpendicular piano. Herr Schwartzenlicht, whom I met going to dress, said:—

"I should laike to baint your bordtrait, but, mein Gott! dere is naow too much egsitement."

Every now and then came from the momentarily opened door of the kitchen an angry hiss and bubble, as if the Furies were stewing their snakes for a private dinner-party of Pluto's. Then there was, now and then, a tremendous smash of crockery, as if the cook had collected some great altar of plates and upset them in sacrifice to the deity of cooking. Waiters with white cravats ran about, giving one the impression of some clerical Low Church convent being sacked by Papist troops. The landlord, too, shouts orders, as if he were addressing the soldiers in English red, now relieving guard in the square outside. I see, as I go up-stairs to dress, solemn processions of waiters, with melons, figs, peaches, and small funeral piles of biscuits, filing into the dining-room on the ground floor. The smell is as of a Paradise of kitchens, and the shirt-sleeved Spanish hangers-on grin and quote proverbs about it. The telegraph at the flag-staff now may toss its arms and fling up its coloured pills as much as it likes, no one in the Club House Hotel cares now even to consult the great Club House Hotel telescope, and make out what all its fuss means.

I am dressing. Spotless black. That curious coat, with bird-like tails; white waistcoat, purer than the snow that never has been driven over; tie, a masterpiece of spotless intricacy. I was half-way down-stairs, and just opposite the clock-case—one of those curious cupboard coffins of dead time and cradles of

the future and the present that are still to be seen on end, grave and sentinel-like, in your English unadulterated farmhouse. Now an Englishman is always to be known abroad by his obstinate adherence and pertinacious adhesion to English things. He wears an Inverness cape at Delhi, and hangs up his warming-pan on the very equator. We all liked the landlord of the Club House, though he charged us twice as much as the Spaniards, because he had an English clock-case and gave us ground cabbage leaves for tea. No wonder the French travellers never came there; you know the French never could stand an English charge. But I am wandering, not merely from England, but from my subject. I had descended three steps, when I bethought me—the clock-case should be the chairman, I would practise my bows and speech there. I began: "Mr. chairman and gentlemen" (in a defiant voice), "If I say this is the proudest moment of my uneventful life—" No, that won't do. "Mr. chairman and gentlemen" (with calm dignity), "In the course of a not uneventful life, I perhaps have never felt my heart burn with an emotion so pure, so generous, as that which ——"

"By your leave, sir!" says a waiter, with a column of plates, looking rather astonished at seeing me apparently defying the clock-case to mortal combat; but a waiter habit of indifferentism and a roar of impatience from the kitchen expel it instantly from his mind.

"Try again" (I think nervously of all sorts of oratorical precepts); "Action! action! action!" "What you are moved by you can move by;" and other hints from the lips of great Roman and Grecian orators—the only defect in which is, that there is a dispute about the reading of the particular word on which the precept turns. I feel very red and anxious, and think of bolting by a back door and hiding in the hold of the *Negus;* but, then, there's my carpet-bag. I feel hurt and tormented. What a misfortune to be popular, to be the idol of a circle! Then I say shame to myself—is not this kindness—generous kindness? Is not this a harvest day of laurels? And I slap my breast, and cry, "Courage, poor heart! courage!" and then laugh at the theatrical effort to back myself up. The fact is ——

I begin again—a George the Fourth bow to the clock-case, which instantly strikes the quarter as if in return.

"Mr. chairman and gentlemen,—I cannot quit Gibraltar this evening without rising to express those grateful feelings" (good! grateful is good!), "grateful feelings which now rise into my eyes, and throb at my heart." (Here I put my hand on the pit of my stomach, the traditional residence of the heart.) "Gentlemen!" (in a Napoleon burst) "I little thought when I first set my foot on arid Spain, the land of—" (here several sentences of description

—melons, knives, saints, black eyes, and hot blood). "I say I little expected to see ——"

"Why, old fellow! are you practising a quadrille with the clock-case? Do you know we are all assembled and waiting for you below? Look alive!"

It was Spanker behind me, reconnoitring my manœuvres calmly through his stony eye-glass.

I go down the long white tables loaded with plate and flowers, and bottles. Ranks of men in black guarded by waiters enfilade the table. Major Hodgins is tremendous and sublime; Herr Schwartzenlicht peery and intent; Spanker serene; Driver merry; Fortywinks regal; Niggle punctilious; Fluker discursive; Doolan quiet and serene; Naggle patient. They rise as I enter, and a buzz of delight welcomes me and the soup that is smoking like a sacrifice of old Rome. The fish was a wonderful study for the ichthyologist; it was an epitome of all Adam named in Eden. To look down the table and see the heads taking wine across small thickets of epergnes and flowers was a wonderful sight. The waiters were electrified. The noise of corks plopping out with a reluctant bang was as of perpetual assassination at an Irish public dinner, where they used to shoot a chairman at the end of every course, as that great Irish historian, Sir Barney Brallaghan, carefully informs us.

I parry the entrées, nod my head at the patés, am cheered as I make allusions to Old England, and

am helped lazily to the roast beef of Albion. There is incessant taking wine: I take it even with Fluker, who is vexed because I will not sit for a second portrait, and who has a slight spot of vermilion on his nose, which makes every one smile, which he attributes to his amusing conversation about the scholastic theology of Dante, and the proofs of his having known of the existence of America. Bensaken is quietly suggestive and deferential in his whispers. Fortywinks is taking notes in a red-bound book. He says to me, when we have nodded together and taken wine:

"My book gets on, though slow, sir: it grows—it grows. I shall enlighten the people at home; Spain is quite a new field. Suggestive country—very suggestive."

"That's what Ford says," says Niggle. "You'll find that in Murray. I say, waiter, run up for my Murray, Number Twenty-two."

"Che es Mary?" says the Spanish waiter, looking round distressed and surprised.

"You know, I suppose, what he says about Gibraltar, that it is——"

"Here is a traveller who swears by Murray!" says Fortywinks, gravely. "To think of men going by an old prejudiced Tory, like Ford! What you quote was altered after he left Spain twenty years ago."

"Well, but Murray says——"

"Mr. Niggle," says Major Hodgins, with a tremendous voice, "I must remind you that it is the custom with us military men at Gib when we go tours in Spain, to fine any man who quotes Murray a bottle of sherry."

"Murray's all rot," says Driver.

"Bosh," says Spanker.

"We want a new book on Spain, my gentlemens," said Rose.

"And you will have one," said Fortywinks, shutting his note-book. People don't know the Spanish character. They travel in cliques; they do not mix with the people; they——"

"Fortywinks, a glass of wine," said Spanker, trying to put him out.

It was no use.

"They mistake the Spanish religion for bigotry, their courage for cruelty. They go in beer-drinking parties from Gibraltar with English officers who ought——"

"No side-winds," said a voice.

"Knock him down, Spanker," said Driver.

"Fling a decanter at him," said Spanker, pouring out a ladleful of mulled claret from a small silver tripod.

"There are men who go into Spain tossing bonbons through gratings, kissing hands to jealously-guarded beauties, insulting every prejudice of the natives, and when they——"

Spanker here caught up a wine-glass with angry intent, when a tremendous knock on the table with a wooden hammer from Major Hodgins interrupted the conflict, and lulled us one by one to silence. The Major stood like Cæsar on the Capitol, one hand in the breast of his regimentals; the other knuckling down on the table.

"Gentlemen,—You are all, I am sure, aware that we are met together this evening to discharge a painful, yet pleasant duty, of bidding farewell to an honoured friend. (Cheers.) I need not dilate on his urbanity, his humour, that has so often set this table in a roar. (Cheers.) I need not waste my weak—(No, no)—words in dilating on his social qualities, on the merriment which hovers round him like a—like a—— (Hear, hear.) Gentlemen, I am selected from among you, not for my eloquence—(Yes, yes)—but for my age and experience in such social matters—(Ironical cries of 'No, no.' Shouts of 'Thirty-one last grass,' from Spanker)—to express the regret with which Gib—I think I may venture to say, I think I am in A POSITION to say, *old* Gib—looks upon the vessel—upon the departure of our esteemed friend, Blank. (Cheers.) (Bensaken, who has been asleep, awakes and cheers when every one else has finished.) We have known him as a delightful friend—as a kind host—as an entertaining and laughter-moving companion. Henceforth he must be for us only a pleasant memory, and what I believe

Tom Moore eloquently calls 'a phantom of delight.' (Rapturous applause. Niggles shakes his head, and says 'Wordsworth.') I, therefore, gentlemen, call on you to fill your glasses, and drink the health of our honoured friend, Blank, with three times three. —Take the time from me. Gentlemen, charge your glasses!"

"Bumpers," cries Spanker; and looks at the bottle with radiant triumph.

"Kentish fire," suggests Driver.

The toast was drunk up-standing with tremendous applause, and Kentish fire, till the glasses hopped for joy upon the table. Then came "For he's a jolly good fellow," and "It's a way we have in the Army," till everybody was red, smiling, and out of breath.

"Give us a short sketch of the History of Spain," whispered Niggle; "I'll keep you right from my Murray."

"Give us pictures, and plenty of colour," said Fluker, with his vermilion nose.

"Facts," said Fortywinks.

"Poetry," said Fluker.

The silence became great, and the constraint evident, and as the bottle began to stick in its orbit, as if no one would take any more till I had spoken, I rose.

"Mr. Chairman, and Gentlemen,—'A full bottle needs no squeezing,' is a true observation, though not a Spanish proverb. Out of the fulness of the

heart the mouth speaketh. As marriage is the consummation of love, and ripe manhood childhood perfected, so are thanks the flowers of gratitude. To quote the poet Ferdusi, man is like the soldier on the march, he gets into snug quarters, hugs the fire, laughs at his meals, prattles with the children, is charmed with the landlady, grows friends with the host. He could live at his billet for ever. Just such a village as he had dreamt of for his age. Bang goes a 'gun—the trumpet blows—his comrades' horses paw the ground—he must mount. The order to march is given, and he rides away. (Cheers. Spanker is affected.) He presses this one's lips and that one's hand; he mounts, and by that happy village is no more seen. All parting is a type of that last march when Death blows the trumpet for our moving. (Fortywinks makes a note, and Schwartzenlicht sobs, not quite understanding the allusion, but observing the earnest 'egspression' of my face.) But with these friendly faces before me smiling approval, how can I be sad? Let me recall some of the pleasant scenes of the strange land, half orange-grove, half desert, we have traversed together, dividing our vexations, and doubling our joys. We have all gazed on the Giralda and the Alhambra, the Arab river, and the Moorish tower. We have together beheld those strange groups and scenes that previously had been to us mere dreams—mere vapours from books and

pictures, themselves, however, beautiful—mere idols and dreams of dreams. (Cheers.) Aided by the learning of Herr Schwartzenlicht, and the critical acumen of Mr. Niggle, the energy of Mr. Naggle, the chivalrous ardour of Lieutenant Spanker—(Deprecatory cries of 'No, no!' from Spanker)—the experience of Major Hodgins, the talent of Mr. Fortywinks, the artistic taste of Mr. Fluker, the zeal of Mr. Rose, and the fidelity of Señor Bensaken, I have returned from Spain thin, brown, footsore, and dusty, but otherwise sound in wind and limb—(applause). With you, friends of my heart, I have watched the bloodshed of the bull-fight, the industry of the wine districts, the hardy poverty of the raisin country, the rough endurance of the fishermen, the beauty of the black-eyed Donnas, the chivalry of the Dons, the sterility of the sand-plains, and the green lavishness of the vineyards. With you I have laughed over Don Quixote's generous craziness and unsuccessful attempts to put an old civilization right by means of the ideal laws of an exploded chivalry. With you I have rambled over Gil Blas, and studied Lopez and Calderon. With you I have shared my delight in Spanish art and Moorish architecture. With you I have watched the roadside water-wheel and listened to the insatiate cicalas. We have been burnt by the same sun and shared the same bitter beer ('Hear, hear!' from Spanker). We have slept under the same roof and sat at the same tables, picked at the same

grape-bunches and divided the same loaf. With your names will ever be associated my sunny recollections of Spain. I never shall part an orange's silver-papered sections or hear a guitar speak, but I shall think, kind friends, of you; and when I reach in old age the inevitable regions of Fogiedom, and pass on querulously to that dark country of Twaddledom, which is bisected by the great black river of Oblivion, I shall bore my delighted children with stories in which your friendly names will be intertwined. Gentlemen—Mr. Chairman and gentlemen—I shall now sit down, expressing once more my fervent and grateful sense of the honour you have done me."—(Tremendous cheering, cries from Spanker, sotto voce, of "He's a stunner now, if you like.")

"He's a regular brick," says Driver.

"I suppose it's too late to get the old trump a piece of plate?" says Spanker. "I shan't care how soon I leave Gib now he's going."

"Don't forget me, Spanker," I said.

"Not I," said Spanker.

"Not likely," said Driver.

Lieutenant Spanker, who had been for some time balancing his glass, cutting oranges into patterns, &c., here rose, with eye-glass stonily fixed in one eye, and proposed the health of the Governor of Gib. He knew that there were men who did not like Gib, and very naturally; for fellows who wanted

the Row, and Tatt.'s, and the Club, and all those things, were sorry they had ever put their foot in it. But for his part, what with parade, looking after the men, the opera, and an occasional ball or two, he (Spanker) pulled through very tol-loll; and so, he thought, did his valued friend Driver, who, whether under tent or in barrack, was always the same regular trump all present had known him to be. He, therefore (I did not see the logic of the "therefore"), proposed to drink the health of the gallant Governor of Gib, up-standing, with three times three. Gentlemen, charge your glasses!

Herr Schwartzenlicht, looking red-beardier and peerier than ever, next proposed the health of "the ladies of England." (Tremendous cheering. Driver and Spanker's glasses both beaten to dust.) It, pareaps, vos not fair for heem, a Gareman gentlemen, to rise up, such a toast so deeliteful to every heart to propose, did he not remember mit what entoosiasmoos such toasts were always received by the Great Britain people, whether at the table of the Lord Mayor, or at the humble rustic pig-nig. It was the fair of England, whose beauty and modesty Mr. Geoffrey Chowser and Mr. William Shakspere had immortalized—Griseldas and Imogenes—they were to be met with all over the world, scaling Monte Rosa, or going up Mount Etna. He, therefore, begged to propose "the English ladies," with all the honours. (Drunk with fiery enthusiasmus.)

"Gentlemens," said Rose, coming in, "the luggage is gone down. It is time to be moving, my gentlemens."

Pressing cigars on me, small bull-terriers, Barbary monkeys, Crimean swords, fishing-rods, accordions, merschaums, and other trifles, Spanker and Driver followed me to the Waterport Gate, where we took boat.

It was a delicious sunset as we slided from the land, and Schwartzenlicht said, referring to Spanker, now fading to a mere scarlet speck on the shore, "Dat is a fine young mans. I should like to have taken his bordtrait."

"By Jove, so should I," said Fluker.

Old Gib grew smaller and smaller; but as long as I could distinguish objects on the shore, I could still see two scarlet specks of exactly the same size standing there—the one was Spanker, and the other was Driver. I kept the glass up till they grew no larger than house-flies—the scarlet blue-bottle behind waving a handkerchief, was, I presume, Major Hodgins, of the Mounted Bombardiers.

CHAPTER XII.

THE P. AND O.—COMING BACK.

THE red-banded funnel was vomiting out wreaths of sable smoke; the sails were black in the dusk as grave-clothes. The stars above us shone faint as if they were paste and not real diamonds of the first water. We were leaving Spain behind us and bearing on fondly and eagerly for England. We were longing to see the dear ones we had left, to hear again their voices. No wonder then that we talked less and thought more; looking down over the bulwarks at the tumbling green porpoises as if they, being mute, and strange, and unsympathizing, were better companions than the smokers, and pacers, and praters of the quarter-deck. There were novels and chess-boards, cards and dominoes, below; but I preferred, when I could no longer see the porpoises in the dark, the bluff, hearty captain and his grog above.

"The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company is one of the most wonderful companies in the world," said Captain Jolly, of the *Oporto*, to me,

as we sat together in the dusk off Ushant, on a green bench near the wheel with which a very able-bodied seaman was struggling as if it was an insane grindstone.

"As how?" said I to the captain.

"In quickness of growth, in enterprise, in wealth, and general go-aheadedness. We girdle the world with steamers; we knit zone to zone; we run 1,357,896 miles per annum" (looking at a paper which he took out of his pocket), "26,113 miles a week, 3,730 a day, and three miles a minute."

"Which is," said I, holding my breath, and taking a balmy sip of my grog, "about eighty-six times the circumference of the earth; think of that, Master Brooke."

"I don't know Master Brooke," said the captain, rather hurt at my tone of jocosity; "he is not in any of our ships. Well, and we do this, sir, at an average consumption of coals four cwt. per mile, or 280,000 tons per annum. Then, from a few steam-kettles of our own, here we are with a capital of 1,500,000*l.*, with M.P.'s and millionaires for managing directors; grown, sir, grown so that you may run over the world, from Southampton to Marseilles, from Marseilles to Alexandria, from Alexandria to Suez, from Suez to Bombay, from Bombay to Hong Kong, from Hong Kong to Manilla, without leaving the deck of a brave P. and O."

"The P. and O. will be never U. P." said I, inno-

cently; "and I trust that the P. and O. will so behave that there will never be an O. P. riot."

"Never," said Cap'en, striking his breast confidently, "never. Boy, some more grog. Look here, sir; I have here in my pocket—I never go without them, to be ready for all discussions—all the nineteen reports that the P. and O. have ever published. Shall I tire you?"

"I defy you," said I, bruising a lump of sugar with a spoon till it fell to a silver dust and rose in bubbles to the surface of the tumbler.

"Very well, then, here we are in our seventh report—just a bab, quite a sucking hinfant." (Whenever the captain became excited, I observed he overdid or under-did the h's.) "Here we are—Court of Directors: Anderson, Bourne, Carleton, Ewart, Hartley, Nairne, Pirie, Thornton, Willcox, Williams, Zulueta. Deputy Chairman: Sir John Campbell, K.C.H. Names I esteem, sir, for their English energy and pluck—names, sir, I shall have engraved on my coffin-plate, when I go down by the head in the Black Sea, sir, as old Jones, of the *Crocodile*, used to say. Here we are—Auditors, Solicitors, Standing Counsel, Secretary, everything; with offices in Simmary Axe. What more do you want, sir? What more do you want?"

I replied, "Nothing."

"Boy, this grog tastes of the fore-hold. More rum, you dog! Do you take me for a landsman?

Well, here we are—red-line books, pens behind ears, pewter inkstand, pads, blotting-books, Perry's steel pens, everything, with only twelve steamers, sir; but yet lively, sir, lively. *Tagus, Montrose, Iberia,* &c., skimming about from Malta to England, and from Ceylon to Calcutta, and Vigo to Cadiz, with our Company's boats—incorporated by Royal Charter, 1840, 31st December; and with capital, one million, in 20,000 shares of 50*l.* each. All I say is, what more do you want for a beginning?"

Again I merely said, "Nothing."

"Very well, then—boy, look alive with that grog, or I'll give you a cool dozen—now let us take the report for 1858. What do we find?" —— pause.

"I don't know."

"How should you? Why, a superb fleet—an armada of no less than sixty-three vessels, representing, by Customs measurement, 81,615 tons, and 18,610 horse-power. Do you call that nothing?"

I thought it better to say nothing but "wonderful," slightly turning up my eyes.

The captain went on with the steady fury of a monsoon, the P. and O. being the special hobby of their good brave servant. "We go like clocks; we are as certain as the sun goes down or rises; in three days from Calcutta you get to Madras, and in seven to the cinnamon groves of Ceylon. You may be as certain of the day, saving wreck and fire—

which are cashalties—as you would be in getting to Nine Helums from Waterloo Bridge."

"It is a mighty Companie," I said, parodying Southey; but Cap'en looked grave, so I stopped.

"Why, God bless my soul," said the captain, "our stock in ships stands for 1,886,175*l.* 18*s.* 11*d.*; and our coals, stores, and property, as 336,896*l.* 14*s.* 6*d.* The loss of the good ship *Ava*, 52,000*l.*, is a flea-bite; for our Guarantee Insurance Fund amounts to 323,774*l.* 19*s.* Then there are our great national schemes—not bubbles of bad water or soft soap, sir, but real, tangible gold, trees budding with sovereigns. If you take the Mauritius mail service, 180,000*l.* a year, just accepted for the new Australian postal service *viâ* the Mauritius, not the Ceylon route; then the silk from China, and the specie sent out to India and China—prospects brighten, sir; more blue, sir; rains of gold for the P. and O., so that soon we shall ballast with bullion. In a year the Egyptian railway will be completed to Suez."

"So we shall have a continuous railway transit between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea."

"Exactly."

"The Directors have comprehensive minds, and watch these things with the eyes of great statesmen; the P. and O. being, indeed, a sort of small nation. Is the P. and O. a liberal company?"

"Princes, sir, princes. Why, when the *Ava* was wrecked, and 52,000*l.* sunk, what did they do?"

I said I didn't know, but I wanted to.

"I'll tell you what they did; I'll tell you:—instead of niggling and wraggling, and splitting shillings and going to law, they proposed a compromise, paid for part of the cargo, and reimbursed the passengers, many of whom were already sufferers by the Indian mutiny.—No sky-larking, boy; go and help the cook in the galley."

The captain here said if I would come into his cabin he would read me a short statement about the Company, written by "a very able man, sir," a man who made great figures in the world, a statement which would open my eyes pretty considerably.

I went like a lamb to the slaughter. The captain put his night-glass on its brackets, trimmed his lamp, and began the Report.*

Just as the captain had finished his paper, there was a heavy trampling on deck, a flapping of sails, as in a laundress's orchard on a windy day, and a general bustle that indicated that the wind had changed, and that measures were in progress to reef the sails. The captain was off like a shot; and in a minute could be heard louder than Boreas, or Æolus, or Stentor, the best of them.

"What do you think of the captain's stories about the P. and O.?" I said to the steward.

* The report, interesting to business men, will be found in an Appendix.

"Never tell lies to an old liar," was that worthy's equivocal answer.

But I afterwards found that the captain was right, or I would not have put down what he said here.

CHAPTER XIII.

WHITE WATER.—HOME.

"THEY are swilling the decks, I am sure of it," I said. Swish, swill, rinse, scrub, scrape, chink, rattle, dribble, THUMP, were the sounds that awoke me in my bed-tray on board the *Oporto*, bound for England —partly that and partly a clammy, cold, naked foot, that, belonging to a thin leg that lowered over from the tray above me, came down suddenly upon my angry, protesting, spluttering mouth like a Burke and Hare plaister. It was the bony leg of the mild little usher coming home from the Lisbon College. A meek little man he was who had exchanged grumbles in dog Latin with me about the want of air, light, food, cleanliness, and general comfort, at times when the pitching used to awake us to a sense of the cabin windows being closed, and of a general black-hole atmosphere: when the P. and O. (Peninsular and Oriental) Company's vessel strained and creaked as if wracked with rheumatic pains and approaching dissolution.

I forgave the meek little querulous man, who had a habit of laughing in a dry, bitter, fretful way at any peculiar aggravation of our seafaring miseries. He laughed now such a laugh, that I knew he must be squeamish.

"O Lord! ha! he! Oh, good morning—*salve*. There's that horrid pitching beginning again. Ah! ai, ai, no breakfast for me—that makes the third breakfast I've—steward, what *are* they doing over our heads at this time in the morning?"

"It's only the men scrubbing the decks!" I suggested.

"Ha, ha! ONLY? Oh, yes! it's all right. I suppose—there goes the captain's watch-chain again—ha! ha!" (Mephistophelian laugh,) "but never mind, it can't last for ever. I suppose we shall be at Oporto to-morrow?"

"There, or thereabouts, sir," says a cheery voice inside one of the cabin pantries, going on to sing, "I sailed in the good ship the *Kitty*."

"Who's that?" said I.

"Oh! that's that unfeeling steward (ha, ha!)—lively pleasant dog; I do think the company that—steward!"

"Yes, Mr. Macarthy."

"Oh! what's a good thing, steward, for sea-sickness? I know I shall injure some vessel."

"Well, don't let it be our vessel, Mr. Macarthy. Where's that long broom, Tom?"

"The brute! there he is again: but what do you really think, steward, is a good thing for this dreadful sickness? I am giddy. No appetite—no ——"

"Well, I'll tell you," says our steward, suddenly emerging in his tarry shirt, crossed by picturesque scarlet braces, his face with its usual dull, injured, sniffing, half-knavish look, as, combing his rough black tufts of hair, he puts on a medical look, "I'll tell you," coming up to the little sufferer's bed.

"What? what? I thought you knew something," said the little man, raising himself up on his elbow, with his usual groan, and eyeing the steward with a look of worried eagerness.

"Get up ——"

"Oh! I should be sick directly."

"Not you. Get up, go on deck, take a tin cup, get it filled with salt water."

"Salt water? (ha, ha!)" sinks back in a sort of swoon of vexation.

"Salt water, and swill it off. What you want is getting rid of all that bile and rubbish out of your liver, then you'll be a seaman, and eat your food like a man. Where's the use of ——"

"Steward!" cries the storekeeper from his inner bin, and steward, pronouncing a blessing on the storekeeper, runs off.

"Now. I call that man," said the usher, "a fellow who would murder you for half-a-crown—a—but there—well, it won't be long. I suppose we shall

be at Oporto to-morrow, and then we shall reach Vigo on Wednesday?"

"Lord love you, if we get to Vigo by Thursday," said the steward, suddenly reappearing, "call me tinker. Why, do you know how far it is from Oporto?"

"Steward!"

"Drat it, this is how I'm pulled about. Tell the captain I ain't paid to wait on him: he's got his own boy; if this wind lasts, we may be blowing for weeks about the Atlantic." (Runs off.)

"Ha, ha!" croaked Mr. Macarthy from his pillow, not seeing that this was said to tease him.

Steward reappears.

"Jack, where's my long broom? Drat that boy, he's in every one's mess and in nobody's watch, and there's the head steward who goes about as fine as a scraped carrot, he——why, Mr. Macarthy, I have known the time as we've beat about four days off the mouth of the Tagus not able to get in; but still this time, though the wind is dead against us, and we're not making six knots an hour, I think ——"

"Stew-ARD!"

"Oh, yes, call again. That's right; more of ye? —all at once. I like that, I'll cut myself in three pieces to oblige you. There's the captain wanting his coffee this half-hour, and here am I——"

"Rogers, are you coming for these stores?"

"All right. I'm looking after a gentleman passenger here as is taken unwell" (winks at me).

"Let me once get on land again, if you catch me ——"

"Ah, that's what they all say, and yet they come again, don't they, Mr. Benaset?" (to a Gibraltar higgler in the next cabin.)

A subterranean voice thunders "Yes!" and expresses a gentle wish that the steward may meet with a bad end for keeping gentlemen so long waiting for breakfast.

But I must sketch the cabin and its inhabitants. I am in the second-class looking for character, because nice and respectable first-class people are not amusing. Our fellow passengers are the little grumbling usher, a small, smooth-faced, vexed little man, who never gets out of his tray, but talks to us sinners from this eyrie, this coign of vantage resembling the home of the strange tribe said by Silius Italicus to have lived in trees. There, in his dark shelf, the little man cracks feeble jokes about upright men, drinks to our health, and immediately after a hurried meal lies down and goes to sleep, with a selfish timidity that is amusingly characteristic. Then there is a yellow, clay-faced Spanish woman, a fat, vulgar shop-keeper's wife from Vigo, who sits at table on a camp-stool, with that flaccid, lack-lustre, cheerless look of sea-sick people whom no joke can brighten. She picks out her food, grumbles in Spanish at the

blood-red raw meat the English eat, laps up a vulgar quantity of soup, and smiles faintly. The fat, merry head-steward, who is our chairman, is afraid she feels the motion of the vessel; she certainly does feel it, and if it continues will not be seen by us for a day or two. She sits at table with her green parrot "Maraquita" perched on her left wrist, and taps him on the head with the spoon if he ventures to peck more than his share out of the plate. It is amusing to see the old bird roll the gray blind film over his stealthy eye, waiting for her head to turn. Sometimes she shares an apple with him; and it is rare to see our droll steward chirp out "Maraquita," in a funny rhythmical voice, as the bird eats the fruit, using his claw as a fork, and his bill as a sort of scissors-knife. Then there is the lady's father—an old Spanish miser, not the least troubled by the sea, but dry, stolid, sullen, and cautious. He eats voraciously, seldom goes on deck; but sits near his bundles—which the steward says contain all his money. All day he broods in a corner of the cabin on a stool, like a man whose life is a burden to him, or one who, not caring for travelling, regards it only as a means. He is returning from Rio Janeiro. He never laughs, or even smiles; but sits under the hatchway roof, where I see him, when I come down to my frequent sleeps during the day, hid in the swinging shadow that shows his low, careworn brow, and mean, anxious eyes, alternately

dark and light. The higgler from Gib, not a refined man, but amusing from his absurd airs of gentlemanly care for his very dirty dress, makes a special butt of this old man, encourages the droll steward to gibe him, and, taking advantage of his being dumb and deaf as to our language, keeps calling, "Speak to him, steward, speak to him! Ask the old man something, steward! Speak to him!" till I have to interfere, for I see the hot Spanish blood turning Pedro's yellow eyeballs red—and even old men can use knives. Then our Gib friend laughs in his cringing yet insolent way, gets more gorgeous and imperial than ever, requests the loan of a hat-brush, pulls his grimy collar up and his grimy cuffs down, devotes half an hour to unpacking a blue hatbox full of Gibraltar fruit, looking at the rough gold-rinded melon to see if it is burst, rubbing dry some pomegranates, and eventually repacking them all but one half-rotten apple, which he peels and ravenously eats all to himself. He then launches out into a ridiculous rhapsody of theological philosophy, which makes the little usher above me shake in his tray. I can feel the tray over me vibrate with indignant and contemptuous amusement. If it was the steward, he would mutter *Stultissimus!* to catch my ear; but he is afraid of the philosophical higgler, so cries *Bene, Bene!* and *Sophos!* as if at a Roman play, which rather pleases "the party from Gib," as the steward calls the fruit-merchant when he is on deck.

As for the steward, he is a born jester—just such a fellow as Shakspeare took for his stock to graft a Touchstone upon—a dry, quick-witted fellow, always singing, sweeping, joking, washing, laughing, and making the beds. His stories of the Sultan of Trebizond, who offered him three pounds a week as prime minister, and whose acquaintance he picked up while carrying that august personage in a fruit ship which he commanded to Stamboul, are perfect. If you awoke at six o'clock with a buzzing in your ears, it was always the steward who was sure to be up and busy, singing, "I've a heart that can feel for another," the "Rose of Allandale," or some heart-piercing ditty which his droll face lent especial charm to. But dinner was his great moment. Then, if anybody called him a fool, he asked what sort of fool —a natural fool or an artificial fool; then he told the square of laughing faces, in answer to some observation, that he was one of the nonesuches—there were only two of them, and the other one was lost coming home. Then if any one asked him where he thought they were? he said, "Somewhere here, as Geordy said to the fool when he rubbed his hand over the captain's chart." Then he wished he could invite us all to his house that was not built at Fiddler's-green. A heavy wave thumping at regular intervals on the ship's side rather ominously, he facetiously called, "Somebody knocking at the door." If a boy was stupid, he used to say that he'd rather

any day have a dirty rogue than a hanged fool. He ran over with droll proverbial sayings, that would have made Charles Lamb leap for joy. He'd as soon play as work, was a favourite observation of his; and he was fond of asking, if the vessel went down, if he should come and let us know. He was full of quips and turns; if you flung a joke at him, he returned it like a fives'-court wall does a tennis-ball.

On a rough day, when the cabin-doors were slamming, the sails blowing out, and now and then splitting with the noise of a cannon, the sea smiting the vessel hard body blows, and then swashing over her with a roll, and sprinkle, and rinse that kept us all below, and threatened to drench us even there, it was pleasant to see the steward, singing "Paddy O'Rafferty was a Haymaker"—rough weather puts old sailors in good spirits—come splashing down the brass-bound cabin-stairs, barefooted, his streaming mackintosh wet, shining, and dripping; in one hand a dish of potatoes, in the other that traditional gross boiled leg of mutton, piled up with coagulated floods of melted butter, common to steamer dinners.

"My dear soul, look out," he cries to the old man who is in the way. "Now, my tars," he cries, "take your places. Tom, you run for two more spoons, and tell the "party from Gib" and the two Welshmen dinner is ready. The Moor with the stewpan has got his own gruel; and our little friend the usher (in a

whisper) will have his goose cooked in his berth. Oh, you'll kill yourself, Mr. Macarthy, as sure as I shall be some day hung; if you do, don't lay your death at my door."

Still, what "a weary pound of tow" that was from which I now spin my sea-yarns! How drearily and leaden-footed passed the hours! I awoke with the clink or racket overhead; and directly I awoke came over me the dull sense of being at sea—cabined, cribbed, confined. If I sprang up, thinking something had happened, or with the vivacious energy of land, I knocked my head against the boarded bottom of the bed-tray of the little querulous usher who slept above me. It was hard to get one's hand into the little gutter at the bedside where I kept my watch, toothbrush, and Don Quixote. The little man will not hear of rising, he is sure. "The motion is worse," and he thinks by the perpetual chirrup of the boatswain's whistle, with the two angry cuckoo notes, that they are going to put on more sail, and then "we shall have that dreadful pitching again." I leap out of my tray half dressed. The steward is scraping a burnt loaf, and singing "Beautiful Eyes." I prepare to perform my toilette, jammed in as I am in a small cabin, and walled in with beds. One sniff of air at the foot of the cabin-stairs seems like the breath of a May morning after that little close black hole, with its four horizontal trays. I stagger, holding on by the beds—for the

vessel rolls and staggers—to the brown painted basin with the tap and chain, to the glass and the row of tumblers stuck in frames. I wash and dress hastily, for three people are waiting, particularly two hearty Welsh miners, coming back from the mines at Linares, and who are always saying, "Look you," and talking of "the seese in Wales," and the "trout fis at Dolgethly."

Every now and then I am jolted up against the cabin-door, as I hasten on deck to see where we are, just as the hearty ship-bell strikes, and the sturdy voice chants out the hour. There it is, all the same as last night: the same unswerving face at the wheel; the same man in dirty canvas shirt on the look-out, talking when the chief officer is not looking; the same greasy black-boy swarming up a spar to furbish the copper-sheathings of the mast, clinging with one hand and rubbing with the other; another ship-boy, with bare feet, dragging about a great wet swab of rope, which he finally hangs near the bowsprit on its special pegs. There is the captain busy at the log-book in his glazed cabin. The second officer is musical and melancholy upon the accordion; the chief engineer, silent and sullen, is on the foksal, taking a breath of fresh air; on the quarter-deck are two young bagsmen, who—affecting the nautical, when they are ill (which they are every day), and declaring that they are old yachtsmen, but these "cursed steamers" always upset them—are calling

for coffee. There is the old merchant from Corunna, who saw Sir John Moore buried, and the little, shrunk man who means to live at Vigo, and who tells a story of saving his wife in a wreck, off somewhere near Cape Saint Vincent. The deck is wet but clean; the engine is trembling, and lifting, and heaving, and breathing hard—just as usual—and there are the industrious firemen still raking at orange-coloured flames with a noisy slam of furnace doors, and a jolting and shovelling in of perpetual coal. The sailors are high up on the yards taking in sail, and the chief mate—a good man—"who carried away his funnel off Melbourne," whatever that casualty may be, is addressing the greasy, barefoot boy who, leaving his copper, is now at the end of the yard doing something to what I believe is called the weather-earring.

Very choice, rapid, and hard-hitting are the chief mate's interjections, fired up like rifle bullets at the prudent boy. The good but violent man, shouting till he is red and blue in the face, puts both his hands together, like a trumpet, and screams through them,

"Halloh! you Rogers, there! Why the (*blank*) don't you out further on that yard—eh?"

The sailors, all doubling over on the long horizontal spar, go on tying the reef points or hauling at the great central black mass of bedclothes-looking canvas, but steal a moment for a flying glance at Rogers and his tormentor.

Rogers stoops down, clinging with one hand, and bellows out some excuse, but the blustering wind that sucks in and out the yet unreefed stunsail below him drowns his reply.

Chief mate, craving sympathy, looks at me injured and beseeching, then with a private adjective or two (kept for the special rough weather, with a fresh broadside of rage) thunders out high above the wind,

"Why, you son of a sea-cook, there's room enough on that yard beyond you for a country dance. As sure as you come down I'll give you a rope's end, you (*blank*) lubber."

Then, to help, with springing-step on the ladders of rope-stirrups, up go two or three more able-bodies, and swarm out on the yard, dragging at the canvas, and lashing it up, as neat as if it was never going to be disturbed again.

I have been watching the white-capped, white-clad cook making toast on a large scale, and spreading the butter with a large paint-brush for first-cabin breakfast, when our steward comes up and tells me our meal is ready.

Do I know where the little gentleman is; he is actually got up?

"I told him," says the steward, "he was killing himself lying in bed. How could I get through my duties, you know, if every gentleman kept in bed? Bad enough as it is."

I find the little man sitting, like a vignette to Harvey's Meditations among the Tombs, on one of these long, cane elbow-seats, peculiar to steamers' quarter-decks, where, by day, we read, and at night, told stories, joke, sang, and flirted; one hand is on his forehead—his look is vapid and lack-lustrous.

"Oh, it is you! Isn't this dreadful?"

"Well, I feel very jolly," says one of the yachtsmen, who turned in yesterday during the swell, and had only just appeared.

"Try a little steak, sir, or some twice-laid—roast pork, sir, in very good cut," says the steward, making dreadful faces of enjoyment behind the sea-martyr's back.

"Could not eat a mouthful. Bring me a cup of tea and a crust. And—steward!"

"Yes, sir!"

"Put a spoonful of brandy in the cup, for my poor stomach. Oh, if I once get on land again. But where's your friend?" (faintly and palely to the yachtsman with the pluffy face and insolent simper).

"Oh, it is astonishing," said the hardy Norseman of Gravesend, "how the change of craft upsets him. When we had the *Hirondelle* we cared for no weather,—in and out—up and down. Why, at Margate, do you know, they used to call me the Red Rover, and Fred the Bold Commodore."

"Where is the Bold Commodore moored at this special moment?" said I, maliciously; for, during a

giddy qualm the day before in the bay, the vaunts of the Commodore had rather irritated me.

"Well—I—yes—no—down below—I think," he stammered.

"Oh, no, he ain't below," said the steward, who was generally somewhere on the skirts of every conversation, and delighted in the humour of mischief.

We were pacing the parallel lines of the quarter-deck planks, as well as we could for the log-line that was being hauled in by a boy, whose dirty face is still to me one of the pleasures of memory. I looked along, by the paddle-boxes, on the high foksal where the Moor, with the stewpan, was preparing his breakfast. Not there.

But what is that bale of striped horse-blanket, lying in a wet tumbled heap at the foot of the black and red striped eighty-two-pounder of a funnel, whose banner is now of sulphurous mud-coloured smoke, drifting on the wind straight to the Portuguese coast, miles away to the right? The luggage is all below. There are no Arab Gallegos sleeping on the deck. What is it? Suddenly a green and white face, unshaven, and with frowsy, tumbled hair, looks out, like a sick Indian chief from a hut, or a dying gipsy from his tent, and feebly mutters, with a frightened and despairing stare, "Stew—ard." It was the Commodore. I know it was cruel, but I broke into an irresistible laugh—the contrast was so humorous.

"Where be your gibes now?—where be your jests, that were wont to set the table in a roar? What! all gone? What! quite chapfallen?" The Commodore never rallied again, but we retrieved him from that mere wallowing and fallen Belshazzar condition at the foot of the funnel, where he for two days and nights had been obstinately groaning like a sickly bear under a charred tree. He rallied a good deal when we stopped at Vigo. He even sat up and sipped feebly at some soup, shaking his head in a painful and ludicrous way, but altogether declining the question, if you asked him anything about the rules of the Royal Yacht Squadron, on whose signals and rig he had for a few short boastful hours, "Youth at the prow, and Pleasure at the helm," been a loud-voiced and rather insolent authority. I never saw him again; but his fickle-brained companion, the young bagsman, the Red Rover, in fact, actually got to the length, the last day before we reached home, of pacing up and down with the portly captain and discussing whereabouts we were. I really think, if he had been pressed, he would have taken the command at very short notice, and have steered us safely to the bottom, in strict accordance with his little red black thumbed book, containing the rules of the Royal Yacht Squadron.

After all, in spite of the great fleet of porpoises that rolled round us like black wheels in the sea, and in spite of the long file of wild geese that flew by in a dark shotted line, the voyage was dull. It was

always the sound of bells, and a meal just gone or just coming; on Sunday, prayers (if the weather were not too rough, for sailors work in danger, and pray in safety). It was a scramble up the shiny cabin-stairs—an hour's read, stretched out and leaning against a coil of ropes—a looking out for whales—if in harbour, fishing for little prismatic mackerel, that the green sea round our vessel seemed alive with—a pacing up and down the deck—and then a turn in from sheer yawning weariness, in spite even of the steward and his stories about his friend the Sultan of Trebizond, and his being wrecked in a "fruiter" not far from the Gulf of Patras. It was always that staggering down-stairs, that crawling into one's tray, and sleeping till some new meal drove one to fling oneself out again on the floor, rubbing one's eyes, and with the dew of a useless lotus-eating sleep on one's forehead. Then it was the abortive attempt to read drowsily for some three pages; then more lounging on deck, and more dog-sleep till grog-time, and the blessed seasonable dark eight hours' oblivion of a sea life.

Our steward was the most chronic grumbler I ever met with. He had dreadful complaints against the head steward, whom he was always going, when he got to port, to pull up, to teach him "what he had a right to do, and what he hadn't." So he had against the sentimental, musical, melancholy-looking store-keeper, whom I always took, for a day or two, as he sat

opposite me, to be a sea-sick passenger. His "Kathleen Mavourneen," on the small-tooth comb, was perhaps one of the most touching pieces of instrumentation performed in public. Storekeeper used to weigh out the day's rice, sugar, tea, &c., and perform on the accordion alternately, making, in a word, sandwiches of his duty and his pleasure. Of that dark, lamp-lit shop of his, lined round with tin-tied boxes of almonds, dried fruits, and cigars, be made a perfect cave of harmony; he was a bird, and that was his cage. He heard the jokes of the steward with a painful and uneasy smile; a great contrast to the jolly, flaxen-haired old boy, the respectable head-steward, at whose presence our Yorick always put on a churchyard gravity, being snubbed if the dishes were too large or small, or any complaint was made about anything, whosoever fault it might be.

On all occasions of stoppage, delay, or accident, the steward's was the first face you saw. He seemed to do the whole ship's work, and, at spare times, give a friendly shoulder to the lumbering engine, whose breathing we could always hear, whatever part of the ship we were in, and the workings of whose great metal arms were always audible. Once a half-naked, coal-stained, perspiring fireman was knocked down and cruelly mauled by a mountain of coal falling on him down in the coal-room. There was no doctor on board, but the steward washed him, and bound his poor pale head with plaisters, like a regular

surgeon. He it was who, singing "I've a heart that can feel for another," mixed with irrelevant verses of the "Last Rose of Summer," instantly started a subscription for the poor fellow, who the rest of the voyage was a little delirious, wandering about, day and night, with a white cloth bound round his head, but speaking to no one. He it was who went ashore at Lisbon to buy meat, at that market where a broken-legged fat turkey stands sentry, and returned, just as our steam was snorting signals, triumphant, with a boat full of red and white joints of beef and mutton, piles of rocky melons, and nets of golden-rinded lemons. He it was who, when the heedless Gallician butcher, who came with him, left his scarlet umbrella behind in the vessel, to prevent keeping the steamer till the gesticulating rogue could return for it, sent it afloat over the waves, much to the Gallician's annoyance. He it was who used to tie the cord to the flapper of the fat cook's pet turtle, when we were lying off Gib, and let the creature row and tow about for a good fifty yards out. "Why, good heavens, here's a turtle swimming about," everybody used to say, seeing the small-headed, large-stomached monster, true type of its future consumer, paddling deep down in the blue jewel-lighted water, serene and happy. We once let a stout wine-merchant, whom we knew to be an epicure, man a boat and take immense trouble in securing the delicious monster, only at last to draw him nearer and nearer to the surface, and find the

cord of ownership around him. Cleopatra, when she made the diver fasten the salt herring to her Antony's hook, could not have laughed more at the epicure's blank dismay than we did. Behind us, egging us on, was always the steward.

At Vigo, under circumstances requiring peculiar fortitude, that steward's character broke upon us in new and finer lights. We had been running along a fine line of battlemented coast, and slowly, about the afternoon, drew near Vigo, with great fears that we should not be able to land, as the yellow fever had appeared at Oporto; and when once a man at Oporto has the yellow fever, such is the sympathy and unanimity of that people, that every one has it: the steward, clenching his eyes and making a noxious face to a crowd of quidnuncs who were intensely anxious to land, was pretty sure that Vigo would have telegraphed direct to Oporto to announce that we must not touch at that pretty little Welsh-like port that our Admiral Vernon once forced his way to through splintered booms and smitten vessels. We knew our danger, and were straining all our eyes to the shore of the Promised Land. The robust, fierce-faced Portuguese colonel was leaning over the bulwarks; the wine-merchant with the pretty governess and portly wife, going to England, were sitting on Marius-in-Carthage heaps of yellow-labelled luggage; the little cynical usher was clinging to the shrouds, not thinking much of any of us, but

with a special glance of indignation at the steward, who was cursing Vigo to the white cook, who was polishing a banjo-shaped stewpan; the ladies were in chattering heaps, prettily anxious, and asking unnautical questions; the short, stout captain, the whites of whose eyes were of a low-toned coffee colour from having served a long time in Africa, and who has a cheery voice that would talk down a monsoon, stands in defiant attitude on the little bridge that joins the paddle-boxes. The engine seems to have some disease of the heart, and beats intermittingly. "Stop her!" roars the captain—somebody stops her—full stops her. There we are swinging up and down in the wide blue sea, two miles from the bar of Vigo, swinging in a high wind as if some great wind spirit were rocking us up and down for a joke. The little usher tries to put on a Columbus-look and sight the new country; but it will not do; the great blue horizon, that seems of molten lead, sullen and yet fluent, rises and lowers like a sudden inundation, its running up and down is too much for our little circumnavigator. "Tom Cringle," in the red and yellow Routledge cover, drops from his hand, with a groan he lies down at full stretch on the raised roof of the cabin, shutting his eyes against that hideous giddy rising and falling of the horizon that gives one the sensation of being in an up-and-down at Greenwich Fair. Up and down we go like an egg-shell on the sea; my eyes

strain at the coast; all I see is a white line of surf—that is the bar; the fort and two or three houses—one of these is the signal-station. Vigo lies round inside there to the right.

"Do you see any boat coming?" roars the captain to the first officer.

First officer, with his long glass tube pointed like a small howitzer at the dilatory town, thinks they are putting off a boat. "No! there is nothing. Yes! there is a flag going up at the tower."

"Bring the signal-book!" thunders the captain. It is in his hand. The steward brought it.

"What do you make it?"

"Blue, white—82."

"Look 82."

"Right! reply 60 green."

Up went our answer in a small pill that blew out as it went up the line into the P. and O. emblem.

They asked (72—red and a cross), "Had we touched at Oporto?"

We replied (97—white and black), "We had, but had only received fumigated letters."

Now there is a hitch.

They reply with 83, 110, and 40, which, being interpreted, means, "Is Mr. Smith on board?"

"No! No! No!" we answer, till the deck is strewn with rolls of red, yellow, blue, and green flags.

We have exhausted the signal-book, and can get no answer but that ridiculous question of "Is Mr.

Smith on board?" Somebody says 40 does not mean Smith but Jones; and we all get so confused that at last the captain, red in the face with hurling anathemas at the frightened and obstinate city, orders the flags to be taken back to the quartermaster's cabin, and slams up the signal-book. Steward thought it would come to that when we carried away that sheet last night, and when we brought-to at Oporto after gunfire, instead of going on and refusing to communicate with the yellow-fever city. He is just beginning again his great story of the Sultan of Trebizond, when "I think I see a boat, sir!" sings out the first officer, whose black tube has never left his keen and anxious eye.

"How far off do you make it?"

"About a mile from land."

Now we shall hear something, and this dreadful up and down will have an end.

Immense excitement as the boat grows out of the waves from a dancing speck to a real eight-oared fishing-boat which has put off at some danger, for the surging bar, in this weather, is not very safe to pass. It comes bobbing over the great blue hill-waves, pulled by some fishermen, to whom we throw a rope, but they keep as far as they can from our supposed fever-haunted vessel, and keep pushing off with oars and boathooks. We are in a rage. They are in a rage. They shout. We shout. The Vigo passengers turn pale and cling to Captain Jolly.

The pilot, a yellow ape of an old man, in a broken straw hat, stands up and hands us on a cleft stick a letter from the English consul. The crew, hardy-looking, dark-eyed fellows, in pink shirts, are all smoking, except one young Don Juan, the handsomest stripling I think I ever saw, who is conscious of our admiration, and pretends to tighten his soiled red sash. At the thwarts sits a red-capped, brown Caliban who, every time the boat drives up against our paddle-box in the heavy sea, has to scuttle down to prevent being crushed to death or knocked overboard—a game of chances he grins at and seems to enjoy. Every wave sends the boat up ten or twelve feet, till I get giddy staring at the strange foreign-looking crew and the gesticulating angry captain, who refuses all communication with us, telling his men to row back, though we hand him a grand sealed letter from the consul at Oporto proclaiming our sound health. He pretends to read the letter, then tosses it back with a look of horror and indignation as if it were a dead skunk, and tells the men to put off.

Our captain, by a noble stratagem, manages, during the negotiations, to pour in on the angry Portuguese pilot all our luggage, and the passengers, who are dying to land; but the ape all but tosses the passengers and the trunks into the sea, and shakes his clenched fist at us.

"You touch!" roars our captain; "you in quarantine, Manuel!——"

"None touch—none," he cries.

With violent benedictions we part, *minus* some propitiatory cigars that I had thrown down into the boat to lubricate the negotiation.

"Quarantine?" says the steward, as if in answer to somebody. "Why, the last time we were at Vigo they put us in limbo for fifteen days because we had a man on board who had hurt his leg falling from the mast. There! they're all alike, a set of —— But what can you do with a captain who begins to take soundings for Portland in the middle of the Bay of Biscay, and who is afraid to carry stun-sails when a man-of-war would have all her sky-scrapers and moon-rakers out bleaching? When I was off Cape Matapan in a fruiter—— "

"Steward!"

"There they go! It's not a life, this: it's what I calls purgativy. That's the storekeeper: he can't put out what we wants all at once; but—— "

"Steward!"

"As for that captain, if there was nothing else to do, I think he'd set the engineer to count the revolutions of the wheel, or the ship's boys to shift the ballast and paint the weights. It's a life only fit for a dog!" And off he went, singing,

"No flower that blows is like the rose"—

the merriest grumbler that ever washed glasses or scraped plates.

Whenever we saw the steward putting the "fiddles" on the table at meal-times, we knew there was mischief brewing, that the wind was rising, and that there would not be many at dinner. The fiddles were square mahogany frames, put on the table to keep the plates in place in rough weather. If the little usher saw the fiddles coming down from their rack over the door, he gave himself up for the day, did not attempt to rise, and groaned as if the rack was his bed and his bed the rack.

Another humour of the steward's was his polyglot language, picked up in innumerable voyages, not without wrecks and dangers. "It cannot zomper la cabeza" (break the head). "Roma—rum, eh? Señor like roma: roma very good for stomago," were the exhortations he addressed at grog-time to the Spanish passengers, who looked upon him as the great Director of the ship. It was delicious to see him tease the thirsty Lisbon merchant who went on with us home; to hear him preach the necessity of keeping la cabeza (the head) fresca (clear); or to see him hand some scraps of dishes, with an imperial and munificent air, to two rough John Portuguese sailors, who slept at the bottom of the well-like hold, and sat there all day playing cards on a tarpaulin. I liked to see him watch the rough group of Spanish man-of-war's sailors, whom we were taking to man a Spanish vessel in England, as they sat arranging their breakfast on deck, counting out

biscuits, or pouring their coffee into their tin cups, with the gambols and mad-cap tricks of so many schoolboys going home for the holidays; contrasting strangely with the patient gravity of some Gallegos going from Lisbon to Vigo, who sat all day on their bundles, in their queer Irish great-coats, leaning on their great green umbrellas, and silently counting over their earnings,—dull, stolid men as ever plodded through life. The little usher hated them, because he was always falling over some mummy-bundle of a man rolled up in his blanket asleep by the carpenter's cabin. As for the steward, he had always a droll scrap of bad Spanish for them, and sometimes a rich dirty plate and an odd potato for them to stow away—a condescension which gave him the air of a patron, and almost of a Saint Martin, among those quiet frugal men, who helped to lower the orange-trees we took in at Lisbon into the hold, and to stow away the great cases of eggs, and the boxes of raisins, that otherwise always kept two men busy at the windlass while we were taking in cargo.

But for the steward's stories. It was long after we had sighted Portland, and picked up the rough pilot who skimmed after us in his gull-winged cutter, with the square blue flag flying; after, indeed, the white cliffs of the Needles, with the sharp outpost rocks and the sloping green turf. I was at the foksal, reading a Scotch seaman's

story, written by himself, and stitched in canvas binding; my back was against the anchor, and I was alternately reading and watching the boatswain oiling a sou'-wester coat. I had got to a most enthralling part of Macdougal's story—to where, cast on the shore of New Holland, he and three of the sailors who are saved from the wreck (the other survivors died of hunger or went mad), were lying dreadfully ill, from having eaten some poisonous fish. The cook was dead, and lying in the second tent, when, in the middle of the night, Macdougal heard his mate get out of bed, and crawl towards where the dead man lay. He had turned cannibal.

I heard a voice behind me saying, "The captain, Jack, will be a good sailor when the devil gets blind, and he hasn't sore eyes yet." It was the steward, who wanted me to come down into the cabin, that he might, before we got into dock, finish that story of his about his friend the Sultan of Trebizond. I went into the storekeeper's room, the steward sat down opposite me, with his usual grim disgusted look, sobered now by a sense of being about to impart historical information.

"Well," he said, "sir, this is how it was; though in regard as to not having much time (Tom, where's that stout broom?), I feel someat like a man-of-war without guns; so it won't do for me to tell you (look' alive, Tom, with those dishes) how I used to go from

Cephalonia to Patras in a fruiter; how the fig worms used to crawl about the berths, and get into our very beds, (now, then, Tom, for those knives); or how, one morning when I came on deck, I stuck my eyes through the fore-rigging, and saw we were just running on shore on the port-hand of the Gulf (Tell that gentleman, Tom, as wants to get to land soon, to go and push behind, that'll help us). But I must put a stopper on, haul taut, and get to my story of the Sultan. Well, you see (Tom, no larking), we had him on board with all his Circassian wives, at Trebizond: and the wives were in such like cabin of the fruiter as we sits in, guarded by a black eunuch with a drawn sword at the door, who would not let us look in, or go even to get a saucer—(would he, Tom?)—till one night we gave him too much grog. Well, the Sultan's man-servants used to lie about on deck with their turbans on, so that you could hardly move without treading on them—(could we, Tom?) Well, it was when we are about the third day from Trebizond, that ——"

"Steward, come and look after this luggage."

Away he went; I did not see him again till just as we fired the gun as a notice for the people on shore to keep the Southampton dock-gates open. First a rocket went up with a tiger-rush and a serpent's hiss, and broke into starry flowers; then, mid a white glare of the port-fire, our gun thundered and shattered out. Presently we sighted the twin-

kling lines of English dock-lights. Another twenty minutes, and we were home in our own land. So what became of the Sultan of Trebizond I never heard, and never shall hear, which is more.

* * * * *

Since I returned home, I have heard that Spanker is married to the Town Major's daughter, who is said to have rather a temper. Driver is gone to Barbadoes; Schwartzenlicht is busy at the National Gallery, cleaning the curious early pictures recently bought; and the "Travels of Fortywinks" are hourly expected by an anxious public.

APPENDIX.

"In the year 1835 a few individuals commenced running some steam-vessels between London and the Peninsula, under the designation of 'The Peninsular Steam Navigation Company.'

"In the establishment of this enterprise they incurred losses to the extent of something upwards of 30,000*l.*

"In the year 1837, the then Government, being desirous of improving the postal communication with Spain and Portugal, invited the parties who had established this steam communication to submit a plan and proposal for such improvement. They submitted a plan for a regular weekly postal communication by steam-packets between England and Vigo, Oporto, Lisbon, Cadiz, and Gibraltar, and offered to maintain it at a less cost to the public than the cost of the then existing inferior arrangement of sailing packets, &c. The Government adopted the plan.

"About the close of the year 1839, the Government being desirous of accelerating and otherwise improving the arrangements for the transmission of the East India and Mediterranean mails, the originators of the Peninsular Company were invited to submit a plan and proposal for that object, which they did, proposing to provide vessels of not less than 400 horse-power each, to convey the mails direct between England and Alexandria in Egypt, to meet the East India Company's steamers plying between Suez and Bombay, and thereby to effect a considerable acceleration and increased certainty in the transmission of the mails; also to undertake it at a less cost to the public than that of the establishment

of small Admiralty packets of about 140 horse-power, then employed in that service.

"Some previous attempts of private enterprise to improve this communication having failed, the Peninsular Company resolved to attempt it. They obtained a charter of incorporation, under the name of the Peninsular and Oriental Company, exempting parties who might take shares in it from unlimited liability, and on condition that they should open a communication with India by the Red Sea and Indian Ocean within two years from the date of their charter.

"The Company proceeded with all practicable speed to carry out the object of their charter; they contracted for the construction of large vessels of about 1,800 tons, and 520 horse-power each, and despatched the first, the *Hindostan*, from Southampton on the 24th of September, 1842, to open a communication between Calcutta, Madras, Ceylon, Aden, and Suez.

"At the instance of the Supreme Government of India, in order to encourage the establishment of this communication, a premium of 20,000*l.* per annum was offered by the East India Direction, on certain conditions, to the Peninsular and Oriental Company, to be paid so long (but not exceeding five years) as they might desire to comply with these conditions—to cease when they should cease to comply therewith, and to merge in any contract which, in the meantime, might be made with them for a regular mail service with India.

"About the middle of the year 1843, the Company, being possessed of the requisite number of large steam-vessels, made an offer to improve the postal communication with India by the Red Sea and Indian Ocean. A return having then been made to the House of Commons by the East India Company, that the steam postal communication between Bombay and Suez, maintained through their agency, and by their comparatively small and inefficient steam-packets, was costing 110,000*l.* per annum after crediting all receipts for passage money, &c., the Oriental Company proposed to relieve the East India Company of that service; to do it with steamers of 500 horse-power, and thereby to

accelerate and insure greater certainty and safety in the transmission of the mails, and, if required, to establish also a mail communication with Calcutta and Madras, *viâ* Ceylon.

"The sum required for the proposed improved Bombay and Suez service was 80,000*l.* per annum, being 30,000*l.* per annum less than the cost of it as then performed by the East India Company. Nine months elapsed without any reply being made by the East India Directors to this proposal, when in May, 1844, they informed the Oriental Company that they would not give up the Bombay and Suez service, and referred them to the Admiralty in respect to the other part of their proposal.

"An investigation and estimate of the cost of establishing a monthly communication between Suez and Ceylon, Madras and Calcutta, by Government packets of equal power to those proposed by the Oriental Company was then made by competent officers of the Admiralty, and reported to that Board at 42*s.* 6*d.* per mile.

"The Government concluded, after considerable negotiation, a contract with the Oriental Company at a rate of 20*s.* per mile for the service now in operation to Calcutta, &c., and at a rate of 12*s.* per mile for the branch line of service to Penang, Singapore, and China.

"In the year 1845 a strong public desire for the establishment of a steam communication with Australia was manifested, and in the following year a charter of incorporation was granted to a projected company, to be called the Indian and Australian Steam Packet Company. Two years having elapsed without any prospect of the proposed company being able to establish a steam communication with Australia, and the Peninsular and Oriental Company being pressed by some highly respectable parties connected with Australia to make some effort to accomplish that desirable object, in July, 1848, although the Government had not invited tenders for such a service, the Directors of the Oriental Company, desiring to meet the public wish as far as was in their power, offered to bear a portion of the risk of an experimental opening of such a communication. They proposed that two

steam-vessels should be hired by tender by the Admiralty, and be run every two months between Singapore and Sydney; that the Admiralty should have inspectors on board these vessels who should take cognizance, and keep accounts of the receipts for earnings, and of the expenditure; that the Peninsular and Oriental Company should manage the experiment free of charge; and that the risk of it for profit or loss should be borne in equal proportions by the Peninsular and Oriental Company, the Imperial Treasury, and the Local Colonial Government. Tenders for the regular establishment of these services to be invited after the result of this experiment was known.

"This proposal was not adopted by the Government, and soon afterwards—namely, in October, 1848—the Government having issued advertisements inviting tenders for establishing a monthly steam communication between Singapore and Sydney, *viâ* Torres Straits, the Peninsular and Oriental Company tendered for that service on the following terms:—

"They prepared and sent to the Admiralty an estimate of the annual cost of maintaining such a communication by efficient steam-vessels; also of the probable amount of income from freight and passage money, as nearly as the same could be estimated from the information which they then possessed; and the estimated expenses showing a balance of nearly sixty thousand pounds per annum over the estimated receipts, the Oriental Company offered to establish and maintain the proposed service for that sum, with this proviso—that the earnings of the vessels should be subjected to the inspection of the Government, and if the amount thereof should prove to be in excess of that estimated, such excess should go to the benefit of the public, and be deducted from the amount required for the mail service. This proposal was not accepted.

"On the 6th of January, 1848, the Government gave notice to the Peninsular and Oriental Company to terminate their contract for the mail service between Southampton and Alexandria on the 18th of January, 1849, and soon afterwards advertised for tenders for executing that service. The Directors of the Oriental Com-

pany sent in a tender for continuing to perform the service at a reduced cost, and at the same time, as they were aware that exaggerated reports had been circulated as to the profits which the Company was supposed to be making by the contract packet service, they offered to submit to the inspection of any competent parties the Government might appoint the Company's books and accounts, and also to enter into an arrangement, that, in regard to then advertised and all future contracts, the Government should have the option of from time to time inspecting the Company's accounts and transactions, and whenever it should be found that the Company were in a position to divide 10 per cent. clear profit on its capital, any surplus beyond that should be appropriated for the benefit of the public, as a reduction from the sum payable for the postal service. The Admiralty accordingly appointed inspectors, who, after examining minutely the affairs of the Company, reported that it had not yet been able to pay a dividend of 10 per cent. on its capital. The endeavours of the Government to obtain competitors for executing that branch of the service were continued. It was twice advertised; and the Indian and Australian Company having on the second advertisement tendered somewhat under the Peninsular and Oriental Company, their tender was accepted; but after a delay of many months they failed to satisfy the Admiralty that they had any means of performing their proposed contract, or to give any security for their doing it. The time for closing the Peninsular and Oriental Company's contract being within a few days of its expiration, and the Admiralty without a vessel to take the outward India mail, the Oriental Company were applied to to renew their former offer for continuing to perform the service, which they did."

THE END.

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